

Israeli bombing spurred Iraq's nuclear bomb plans — defector

NEW YORK (AP) — Israel's destruction of an Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981 spurred Saddam Hussein to accelerate plans to build a nuclear bomb, an Iraqi defector has claimed, and purchases for the programme were made with the blessing of the U.N. nuclear agency.

Khidhir Abdul Abbas Hamza, once one of the top nuclear scientists in Iraq, told The New York Times on Saturday that Israel's bombing of the Osirak reactor freed Saddam from having to develop the programme in step with its cover, a peaceful nuclear energy programme.

Saddam moved the program from Osirak and increased staff from 400 to 7,000 after the Israeli air force bombed the reactor in June 1981. Hamza told the newspaper.

The programme received as much as \$150 million a month in financing during

the Iran-Iraq war, which otherwise devastated the Iraqi economy.

Hamza said he was amazed that the alliance that defeated Iraq in the 1991 Gulf war — prompted by Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait — failed to bomb nuclear weapons sites, indicating how little was known of the programme.

Nuclear inspectors who assessed Iraq's nuclear programme after the war found that Iraq was one or two years away from building a bomb — not 10 years, as had previously been suspected.

Hamza, who defected from Iraq in 1994, said that many of the nuclear programme's purchases were made with the blessing of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The U.N. agency's inspectors failed to ask even basic questions, "like why an oil-rich nation like ours wanted nuclear power."

Hamza told The New York Times.

A spokesman for the IAEA told the Times that under conditions holding in Iraq before the war, the inspectors were only permitted to inspect sites declared by the Iraqis.

Hamza's revelations come 12 days after Iraq shut down its cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors.

In letters last week to the Security Council, the IAEA chief and his counterpart inspecting chemical and biological warfare warned that the suspension allows Saddam the opportunity to rebuild his programmes.

The Security Council termed the suspension "totally unacceptable" but failed to announce any actions. In February, Iraq backed down after a similar suspension brought the threat of military action from the United States and Britain.

Foreign companies who sold Iraq components for its nuclear weapons programme would often offer to help cover up the purchases as intended for peaceful purposes, Hamza said.

He told the Times that the nuclear programme included a reactor purchased from France, an Italian fuel reprocessing facility, an IBM mainframe computer and Swiss machine tools. In 1987, he said, it almost bought a complete foundry to forge uranium and other components from Leybold and Degussa, two West German companies.

A spokesman for Degussa told the newspaper that both companies were cleared in a criminal inquiry by German authorities.

Hamza, a Shiite, said Saddam used torture — and vast rewards — to keep the scientists in line.



WARNINGS OF UNSTABLE PILGRIMS: American pilgrims Saturday walk along the via Dolorosa in Jerusalem on the occasion of Virgin Mary's day. The Christian millennium may attract a large number of unstable pilgrims to the Holy Land, and Israel should prepare for mass suicides and other unpredictable behaviour, psychiatrists have warned (AFP photo)

Blast in Algeria kills one, injures 10 — press

ALGIERS (AFP) — A home-made bomb exploded near a cemetery west of Algiers, killing at least one person and wounding about 10 others, Algerian newspapers reported Saturday.

Explosives contained inside a plastic bottle blew up, killing a 56-year-old woman visiting the cemetery of Sidi Rachid, near Hadjout, and wounding ten other people, including one seriously.

Al Khabar newspaper reported two people died.

In Medea, three people were hurt Thursday while harvesting crops as several bombs went off in the middle of farmland.

Also Thursday a home-made bomb exploded on the tourist beach at Sidi Fredj on Algeria's west coast, harming no one.

Liberte reported that three people were murdered last week in the west coast region of Tipaza.

The interior ministry Thursday reiterated its call to vigilance so as to "thwart the criminal and cowardly aims of the perpetrators of these attacks."

Three massacres in the south-west region of Ain Defla and the southern Laghouat region, left 16 people dead, according to security forces, who attributed the attacks to anti-government Islamists.

The bloodletting in Algeria has spread from the Mitidja to Algiers, in the west, where Islamists have repeatedly committed attacks and massacres despite anti-terrorist operations by government security forces.

The Algerian press has linked the fresh outbreak of violence in the west to the presence of the chief of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), Antar Zouabri, who reportedly ordered his followers to step up the violence there.

The GIA is one of Algeria's best-known groups of armed Islamists.

Algeria has been beset by violence linked to battles between state forces and armed Islamists since 1992 when the military annulled the second round of general elections which an Islamist party was poised to win.

Since then, according to Western estimates, some 80,000 people have lost their lives in what has become an almost daily toll of killings.

Rival Somali warlord importing weapons — newspapers

MOGADISHU (AFP) — A Somali warlord opposed to the establishment of a joint authority for Mogadishu has imported an assortment of weapons ostensibly to boost the city's security, local newspapers said Saturday.

Faction leaders Ali Mahdi Mohamed, Hussein Mohamed Aided and Mohamed Qanyare Afrah said earlier this month that they were setting up a joint administration to run the war-torn city.

But rival warlords Osman Hassan Ali "Aito,"

Musa Sudi Yalahow and Hussein Haji Bod rejected the new arrangement and warned of serious consequences if it were to be implemented.

"The weapons will not be used to attack our rivals but to help us achieve adequate security," said Ismail Moalin Musa, speaking on behalf of Bod.

He said a new force would be trained to restore peace to Somalia but declined to give details.

The Benadir newspaper claimed that the arms shipment had come from

neighbouring Ethiopia, but an official in the Ethiopian embassy in Nairobi denied the allegation.

"Ethiopia is concentrating on the Somali peace process and not rearming factions," he said.

Bod, currently visiting Ethiopia is expected to meet the Egyptian envoy to Somalia, Mahmoud Mustafa in Addis Ababa and Badar Marwan, the Egyptian ambassador to Ethiopia on Saturday, diplomatic sources in the Ethiopian capital said.

Iraqi papers urge U.N. chief to do more to solve weapons crisis

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi papers called on U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan on Saturday to do more to end the latest crisis over weapons inspections and insisted Iraq will not resume cooperation until its demands are met.

"Is it that Kofi Annan cannot free some time from secondary issues to consider and objectively evaluate the Iraqi cause?" wrote the official Babel newspaper, run by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's son Uday.

"This issue requires Annan to do much more than repeat the unfortunate phrase about 'light at the end of the tunnel' which is making us ill," it said, referring to remarks by Annan about Iraq's demands that the United Nations lift crippling eight-year-old sanctions.

Babel called on Annan "to find the time to verify once and for all the reports of UNSCOM [the U.N. Special Commission on

disarming Iraq]."

"He will realise that the bearer of bad tidings [UNSCOM chairman] Richard Butler is not above suspicion because of his crass behaviour and coarse style which does discredit to his job," the paper said.

Annan's personal intervention in February led to an accord between Iraq and the United Nations, ending a five-month stand-off over weapons inspections and averting a threatened U.S. military strike.

Baghdad's latest appeal comes after Friday's declaration by its U.N. Ambassador Nizar Hamdoun that disarmament experts will be allowed to resume their inspections "only when Iraq's demands are met."

"All options are open, and Iraq is open for any new ideas from the secretary general, but unless our concerns are met it will be too difficult for Iraq to change its position," he said.

Turkey considers imposing visas for Istanbul

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Turkey's government is considering issuing visas to halt more settlements in its largest city, Istanbul, the interior minister said Saturday.

"Imposing restrictions aimed at securing a good and planned urbanisation is not against our constitution," Interior Minister Kulu Akkas told reporters here, according to the Anatolia news agency.

"In that respect, we may consider

introducing restrictions for those who want to settle in Istanbul and even enter Istanbul," Akkas said. He gave no other details.

The city's mayor, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and Turkey's leading newspapers have long been campaigning for the introduction of visas for entering Istanbul, whose population has neared 10 million, according to the last national census last year.

The historic city, which had been the country's capital under the Ottoman empire's rule until 1923, suffers from lack of infrastructure systems in its new areas.

Istanbul's population is increasing by at least 500,000 a year as a result of immigration from less developed areas, mainly the Kurdish-dominated south-east, according to the census data.

The left-wing Republican People's

Party, which supports conservative Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's coalition cabinet from outside the government, has opposed restrictions for Istanbul, saying such a move would be undemocratic.

However, a recent public opinion poll published by Turkish newspapers said some 65 per cent of Istanbul's inhabitants favour issuing visas for non-residents of the city.

occurred the letter. It called for the Emoushment to the case. Emoush dan's o Abled E shortly a day by o carrying warrant. weekly's ment to h have son for h unable to Official's ment on "As far as the nationalist [E] no crime

NEWS IN BRIEF

Amputations for Saddam's 'fighters'

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Six members of "Saddam's Fighters," a paramilitary group run by the Iraqi president's son Uday, each had a hand chopped off for accepting bribes, Babel newspaper reported on Saturday. Uday ordered the amputation after a commission of inquiry found the six volunteers guilty of setting up a fake checkpoint in the southern province of Basrah in southern Iraq and taking bribes from local residents. The newspaper said several members of Saddam's Fighters, formed in 1994 to protect the president, wrote to Uday to call on him to lighten the sentence. But Uday said in a letter published in the paper, which he also runs, that their crimes were "unpardonable particularly as their names were associated with that of Saddam Hussein."

Leftist group claims Istanbul bombing

ISTANBUL (AP) — A leftist urban guerrilla group has claimed responsibility for a bomb attack on a police bus which injured four people. The blast Friday ripped through the bus, which was parked near a university. A statement faxed to The Associated Press bureau in Istanbul Saturday from the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front said the attack was launched in retaliation for the disappearance of four of its members apparently while in police custody. The Marxist group is considered the successor to Dev Sol-Revolutionary Left, a rebel group which claimed responsibility for the killings of active and retired generals, police, secret service agents, government officials and foreigners, including several Americans, over the last few years. Dev Sol was splintered by internal fighting and apparently devastated by arrests.

Israeli police disperse protest

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli police on Saturday dispersed a crowd of 200 ultra-Orthodox Jews demonstrating in west Jerusalem against a restaurant remaining open on the Sabbath, the Jewish day of rest. Mounted police broke up the demonstration as a group of secular counter-demonstrators from the leftist Merez Party shouted slogans against "religious coercion." The restaurant, which offers non-Kosher cuisine, is located on the street of the prophet in a secular neighbourhood at the border of the ultra-Orthodox Mea Shearim district.

Policeman, drug dealer killed in S. Arabia

DUBAI (R) — A suspected drug dealer trying to avoid arrest rammed his car into a Saudi police patrol vehicle, killing himself and a policeman, a Saudi newspaper reported on Saturday. Another policeman was seriously injured in the incident in the western region of Saudi Arabia, the Arabic language Okaz daily said. Okaz said the police were responding to a complaint from a local man who told them the drug pusher assaulted and robbed him when he refused to buy drugs. The newspaper gave no date for the incident.

JORDAN TELEVISION

TEL 477,311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 Cartoon — The Pink Panther

15:20 Cartoon — The Pumpkin Patch

15:30 The Adventures of the Black Stallion

16:00 The American Chart Show

17:00 ...Doc... Royal Blood

18:00 Drama — Bonne Esperance

19:00 ...Le Journal

19:15 French Programme — Science Magazine (E-M6)

19:30 ...News Headlines

19:35 Life's Most Embarrassing Moments

20:00 ...People Count

20:30 Talk Show — Challenges

21:00 ...Drama — Rengade

22:00 ...News in English

22:30 ...Mini-series — Buffalo Girls

00:30 The History of Rock and Roll

PRAYER TIMES

04:31 ...Fajr

05:55 ...Sunrise Doha

12:40 ...Dhuhr

16:19 ...Asr

20:25 ...Maghreb

20:49 ...Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Sweilbeh, Tel. 5920740

Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

Terra Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811.
St. Alfred Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751.
Armanian International Church Tel. 865897.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5685403.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932.
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440.
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138.
Church of Presentation, Sweilbeh Tel. 5920146.
The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757.
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190.
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 892679.
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052.
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Normal summer weather conditions will prevail with tempera-

tures around average and winds northwesterly moderate. In Ajlun, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min/Max temp. 22/33
Ajlun 28/40
Deserts 19/35
Jordan Valley 26/40

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 35, Ajlun 39 Humidity readings: Amman 27 per cent, Ajlun 30 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajlun 28
Jerash 34
Um Qays 34
Madaba 33
Petra 35
Dead Sea 40

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Issam Asmar 480504

Dr. Khalid Ma'addi 5661144

Dr. Nidal As'ad 4751672

Dr. Usama Hussein 5547290

Firas pharmacy 5661912

Al Asma pharmacy 4637055

Naimouh pharmacy 4623672
Al Salam pharmacy 4636730
Yacoub pharmacy 4644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660
Najib pharmacy 5347632

URBID:
Dr. Ali Shugairi 7100069
Al Quds pharmacy ()
ZARQA:
Dr. Randa Shahin 957110
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111

Civil Defence Department 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4620341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Price 192 4621111, 4637777

Fire Brigade 4617101

Blood Bank 4775121

Highway Police 5343402

Traffic Police 4896490

Public Security Dept. 4630321

Hotel Complaints 5605800

Price Complaints 5661176

Water & Sewerage Complaints 4897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

J. Electricity Authority 5815615
Electric Power Co. 4636381
RJ Flight Information 44-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 44-53200

HOSPITALS:
AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 912109
The Islamic, Ajlun 5661317
Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 5856836
Luzula 4630195
Khaldia Maternity 4642816
Akileh Maternity 4642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman 4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071
Shmeisani Hospital 5669131
University Hospital 5353444
Al-Minaheer Hospital 5667279
Al-Abdi, Ajlun 5661164
Iltan, Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3
Al-Badur 4775111/26
Army, Marka 4891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 560224950
Amal Hospital 5674155

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44) 53200-3, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone (44) (52700).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:45 Doha (RJ) (RJ)

09:30 Jeddah (RJ)

09:45 Lamaca (RJ)

10:05 Riyadh (RJ)

10:20 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:30 Bombay (RJ)

17:05 Amsterdam, Brussels (RJ)

17:40 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

18:05 Paris (RJ)

18:50 London (RJ)

19:10 Athens (RJ)

19:20 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)

20:00 Chicago, Detroit, Amsterdam (RJ)

02:15 Cairo (RJ)
Other Flights
06:30 Tel Aviv (LA)
08:55 Dubai (EK)
11:30 Sanaa, Ta'iz (Y)
11:30 Kuwait (KU)
12:30 Jeddah (SV)
12:50 Moscow (SU)
13:30 Abu Dhabi (GF)
15:40 Doha (QR)
18:40 Beirut (ME)
19:00 Paris (AF)
20:00 Tel Aviv (LY)
21:00 Cairo (MS)
23:20 Istanbul (TK)
23:35 Lamaca (CY)
01:15 Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
02:25 Athens, Beirut (OA)
02:40 Belgrade (OK)
03:00 Rome (AZ)
04:15 London (BA)
Royal Wings (RW)
10:20 Ajlun (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport (RW))
10:35 Tel Aviv (QAIA) (RW)
18:00 Ajlun (arriving at Marka Airport (RW))
23:25 Ajlun (arriving at Marka Airport (RW))

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

06:00 Madrid (RJ)

06:30 Lamaca (RJ)

09:15 Frankfurt, Berlin (RJ)

12:15 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

12:15 Vienna (RJ)

12:30 Rome (RJ)
12:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:20 Athens (RJ)
13:25 London (RJ)
21:00 New Delhi (RJ)
21:25 Jeddah (RJ)
22:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:15 Madrid (add) (RJ)
22:15 Beirut (RJ)
22:30 Damascus (RJ)
22:35 Bangkok (RJ)
23:10 Cairo (RJ)
23:45 Sanaa (RJ)
00:30 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

Other Flights

07:30 Paris (AF)

07:35 Damascus, London (BA)

09:55 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (EK)

12:30 Al Hudaydah (Y)

12:45 Kuwait (KU)

14:00 Jeddah (SV)

14:10 Moscow (SU)

14:25 Doha (GF)

16:30 Doha (QR)

20:00 Beirut (ME)

20:45 Tel Aviv (LY)

22:00 Cairo (MS)

02:15 Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)

03:40 Belgrade (OK)

03:45 Beirut, Athens (OA)

04:00 Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings (RW)

08:00 Ajlun (from Marka Airport (RW))

08:45 Tel Aviv (from QAIA) (RW)

09:30 Ajlun (from Marka Airport (RW))

21:30 Ajlun (from QAIA) (RW)

Home N

Recent events

of free express

leaving... of... and 32... Although... were on... Court... year, th... pared d... paper... The... run aw... urges o... the soci... The... which... pend... review... against... "We... ing a ne... age that... the cou... actually... tion." "This... without... sating... newspa... incur... lishing." "This... remove... to inter... a punis... establish... commit... The... that fine... rang... JD10,00... the inter... exacting

Authorities a

to executed

Prosecut... Rababah... Abdul R... the M... patholog... represen... Forces, ... Jlassi ... to the r... when h... authori... motive a... with Ab... Criminal... charges... theft... abduction... of prem... execution... Court of... net and... Accoun...

Journalists' grou

the Shukri Hamzeh

...the Jordan Times

"It's a France-based... defending journal... Emoush has asked His... King Hussein to inter... the freedom of the... of a local satirical... who was arrested five...

frontiers... and in a letter sent to the... Friday that it was con... about the incident and by... attack on the chief... an opposition weekly... the unidentified baton... students on August 8... "to express its deep con... over two incidents involv... journalists that recently

occurred... the letter... It called... win the... Emoush... ment to the case... Emoush... dan's o... Abled E... shortly a... day by o... carrying... warrant... weekly's... ment on... "As far as... the nationalist [E] no crime

occurred... the letter... It called... win the... Emoush... ment to the case... Emoush... dan's o... Abled E... shortly a... day by o... carrying... warrant... weekly's... ment on... "As far as... the nationalist [E] no crime

occurred... the letter... It called... win the... Emoush... ment to the case... Emoush... dan's o... Abled E... shortly a... day by o... carrying... warrant... weekly's... ment on... "As far as... the nationalist [E] no crime

occurred... the letter... It called... win the... Emoush... ment to the case... Emoush... dan's o... Abled E... shortly a... day by o... carrying... warrant... weekly's... ment on... "As far as... the nationalist [E] no crime

occurred... the letter... It called... win the... Emoush... ment to the case... Emoush... dan's o... Abled E... shortly a... day by o... carrying... warrant... weekly's... ment on... "As far as... the nationalist [E] no crime

Recent events highlight importance of free expression — rights group

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Society for Human Rights (JSHR) yesterday added its voice to an international chorus of protest against the draft press and publications law, now two steps away from being enacted.

In an apparent reference to the six-week-old water crisis, the JSHR said that "the last few weeks have given clear proof of the importance of practising free expression, press and exchange of information."

"Therefore, we adhere to our insistence on our human rights, of which the right to a decent living is one, because it will be unthinkable that we achieve these goals when the draft is finally enacted," the JSHR statement said.

The society accused the government of being in violation of the 1993 Press and Publications Law, which now governs the media profession. The 1993 law requires that government equity in the country's two oldest dailies, Al Ra'i and Al Dustour, be reduced to no more than 30 per cent by May 1997.

The government last year introduced amendments to the press and publications law on the day it legally should have sold its remaining shares in the two papers. The amendments absolved the government of this responsibility,

Senators defend committee approval of draft press law as 'necessity'

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Members of the Upper House's Legal Committee yesterday defended their decision to pass the draft press and publications law to the full Senate for final discussion after criticism in the press that the Upper House was little more than a "rubber stamp institution."

"The fact that the Legal Committee agreed with the draft presented by the Lower House of Parliament reflects a comprehensive position [between the Upper and Lower Houses] on the draft and indicates that there is an overall conviction as to its necessity," said Senator Jawad Shoul during an interview with the Jordan Times yesterday.

The nine-member Legal Committee endorsed the draft press and publications law Thursday as submitted by the Lower House following a six-hour discussion. Journalists and editors speculated ahead of last week's committee meeting that the Senate would do little to further champion their cause, saying that the Upper House traditionally has not preferred to make substantial amendments to any legislation passed on from the Lower House.

"The committee is not a 'rubber stamp' committee just because it happens to agree with the deputies," said Mr. Shoul, a former interior minister. "To say so is unfair."

In fact, last month, the Senate's activity in returning legislation to deputies provoked the Lower House into attempting to change parliamentary by-laws to limit that authority.

"Depués have been upset by some of our decisions on certain legislation," he said. "The Water Authority law is one for example."

A major campaign by journalists, editors, former information officials and human rights activists at the Lower House — instrumental in securing drastic amendments to the government's draft — seems to have lost steam, even though media experts have said the draft is far from ideal. Rather, the battle to procure further amendments has been left to a slew of international human rights organisations that last week bombarded Senate President Zeid Rifai with written appeals to reject the draft.

Human rights activists and journalists claim that many articles in the draft contradict both the Constitution and international protocols to which Jordan is a signatory. They also assert that ambiguous language in the draft coupled with exacting penalties will be used to "harass" journalists and force a regime of self-censorship at newspapers.

Mr. Shoul said their arguments had virtually no influence on Thursday's debate. "I assure you that this law does not include anything that violates the Constitution, of which we are the guardians," he said. "To the contrary, the draft has very clear articles that cannot allow for more than one interpretation."

One member of the committee said that the draft on many points was comparable to law in Western Europe.

"We didn't find many differences," the source said. "Especially when you consider how we understand democracy and law in Jordan. You cannot just open the door without any control or any accountability."

"Many times, [we] feel that people who write do not always know the dimensions of what they are writing," the source continued. "There is a huge amount of anger and hatred and we do not want to give it outlets. We do believe the people and the press should raise their voices against the government, but we don't accept writers who write untruths and preach nonsense."

Authorities await family claim to executed killer's body

AMMAN (J.T.) — The authorities are still waiting for the family of a 35-year-old man executed Thursday for murdering a family of three to claim his body, sources said yesterday.

Syrian national, Fathi Jasi, who killed Jamal Abdo, 38, his wife Manal Othman, 35, and their two-year-old child, "asked officials before his execution that his body be handed over to his family for burial in Syria," according to an official source.

Jasi was executed at Swaga Rehabilitation and Correction Centre (SRCC). The hanging was attended by the SRCC Director Sa'ed Jamil Ajrami, a Ministry of Interior representative, the assistant to the

Unemployment conference to focus on adapting educational system

AMMAN (Petra) — The national conference next month on combating unemployment in Jordan will aim at devising a national strategy to deal with the unemployment issue, according to an official.

Tayseer Nahar, vice president of the National Centre for the Development of Human Resources, said the conference, to be held under the slogan "We Are All Partners," is expected to be attended by representatives of the public and private sectors including professional unions, labour unions, political parties, journalists, information services, universities, and chambers of industry and trade.

Participants at the meeting, due to open on Sept. 22 under Royal patronage, will submit working papers focusing on adapting educational programmes at the university, community college and schools levels to meet the requirements of the local labour market, he said.

Linking educational programmes to the needs of the labour market is designed to help graduates find jobs, Nahar added.

Jordan has made major strides in drawing up a plan to help adapt university education in this manner and has embarked on programmes encouraging students to take vocational training courses and developing educational and training programmes at schools in conjunction with the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), according to Nahar.

He said the concerned authorities have also introduced new courses for training students in new trades and professions at VTC centres, including special training courses for women.

Nahar pointed out that the modernisation of training courses is a necessary step to meet modern requirements and to create partnerships between training institutions and industry.

He said the proposed national strategy would among other things entail the creation of a database to provide information about the requirements of the labour market and help job seekers gain employment.



The Cabinet reviews upcoming projects during its second meeting on Saturday, which was held in the Irbid governorate (Petra photo)

Cabinet approves JD212,000 allocation to badia programme

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Saturday approved the allocation of JD212,000 to the Jordan Badia Research and Development Project at the first of two sessions held to approve projects and discuss policy.

During the first session, held in Amman, the Cabinet approved the participation of a Customs Department delegation in the third meeting of the Customs Information Committee, which will be held in Beirut from Aug. 25-27. The meeting will discuss such issues as sharing information, electronically and the possibility of using the coordinating commodity coding system in the proposed Arab free trade zone.

The Cabinet also approved the formation of a Ministry of Youth delegation to take part in the First Youth Forum, which will be held Dec. 12-18 in Sharjah, and the nomination of Kheiruddin Shukri as member of the Board of Directors of the Agricultural Marketing Corporation (AMC).

In its second session, held in the Irbid governorate, the Cabinet discussed issues related to government administration and service-related projects.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali stressed the need to address the bloated government administration, saying that expenditure priorities should be clearly defined.

Referring to university education, Majali said each student at public universities costs the government JD800 per annum. He called on wealthier students to pay required fees fully in order to help accommodate poorer students.

Minister of Information Abdullah Ensour disclosed his ministry's plan to begin television transmissions from Irbid after equipping the local TV studio.

Minister of Social Development Mohammad Kheir Mamsar said the ministry will establish a centre for the multi-handicapped with allocations from future budgets, noting that the necessary studies have been made for this project. He added that the ministry will also reconsider the costs of electricity and water to voluntary societies with a view to reducing them.

On road construction projects, Minister of Public Works and Housing Naser Lawzi said the ministry is searching for financiers for the Irbid-north Jordan Valley road, which has been assigned priority. On the estimated \$25 million Irbid ring road, Lawzi said an initial agreement for financing has been obtained.

Minister of Culture and Youth Tala' Sa'at Al Hassan said his ministry has established a youth hostel in Irbid. He added that part of the activities of next year's Pan-Arab Youth Games will be held in Irbid.

Minister of Health Ashraf Kurdi said the ministry has started work on the extension of Princess Basma Educational Hospital, adding that monies for the construction of King Abdullah Hospital and Yarmouk Hospital in the Bani Kanana district have been allocated.

Journalists' group asks for intervention on behalf of jailed editor

By Alia Shukri Hamzeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A France-based organisation defending journalists worldwide has asked His Majesty King Hussein to intervene to win the freedom of the chief editor of a local satirical weekly who was arrested five days ago.

Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) said in a letter sent to the King late Friday that it was concerned about the incident and by a separate attack on the chief editor of an opposition weekly by four unidentified baton-wielding assailants on August 8.

"Reporters Sans Frontiers... wishes to express its deep concern over two incidents involving journalists that recently occurred in Jordan," it said in the letter.

It called on the King to help win the release of Hussein Emoush and urged the government to launch an inquiry into the case of Nihad Hattar.

Emoush, chief editor of Jordan's only satirical weekly, Abed Rabbo, was arrested shortly after midnight on Monday by over 10 security officers carrying an arrest and search warrant. His family and the weekly's managing editor said they have not received any reason for his arrest and have been unable to contact him since.

Officials have declined comment on the arrest.

"As far as we know, this journalist [Emoush] has committed no crime... He only exercised his right to inform the public, as guaranteed in the International Declaration on Human Rights," said RSF.

The last two editions of the weekly tabloid attacked several government officials for allegedly mishandling the economy and for tightening public freedoms. It also criticised the government's handling of the six-week-old water contamination crisis.

Hattar, chief editor of Al Mithaq weekly, was attacked on Sunday evening by four unidentified men as he returned home with his wife and eight-year-old son on a busy street in Jabal Hussein.

The attackers beat Hattar on the head several times until he lost consciousness.

Police officials said they are still searching for the assailants. Hattar, a leftist and vehement critic of past and present governments, blamed the attack on a former prime minister, the PLO's Fathi movement, a former government minister, and the Israeli embassy in Amman.

He told the Jordan Times that the four parties must have been angered by his recent articles published in the paper and attacking them.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Friday criticised the attack on Hattar. "We do not wish to see any person taking the law into his own hands or taking advantage of the King's absence to tamper with the nation's security and stability," the Regent said.

The Jordan Press Association, the U.S.-based Committee to Protect Journalists, a coalition of opposition parties and the Arab Organisation for Human Rights in Jordan have urged the government to bring the assailants to justice.

The RSF said that there was an "apparent erosion of press freedom in Jordan" and asked the King "to do everything in your power to ensure that journalists are free to pursue their mission safe from the threat of physical violence, as is stipulated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, an agreement ratified by Jordan."

King Hussein is undergoing chemotherapy treatment at a U.S. hospital.

FUHEIS FESTIVAL

* Musical performance by Qamar Badran with the participation of the National Music Conservatory at the main theatre at 9:00 p.m.

SHABIB FESTIVAL/ZARQA

* Performance by Rihani Group at 6:30 p.m.

* Fashion show of women's dresses at 7:00 p.m.

* Concert by Bishara Rabadi at 9:45 p.m. (The festival concludes at 11:00 p.m. with a special ceremony).

EXHIBITIONS

* Summer display of products at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre/Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Sagra (Tel. 569-9141/2), until Aug. 31.

* "Miniatures in Humanities and Environment" by Walid Nasrallah at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Utheina, until Aug. 25 (Tel. 5526932).

Annual QAF contest aims to raise awareness on plight of epileptics

By Munther Murjan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) has launched a nationwide contest to try and help Jordan's estimated 80,000 epileptics, many of them suffering alone in a society that occasionally shuns them.

"The QAF has chosen epilepsy as the theme for this year's annual contest because of the large numbers of such patients in Jordan," said Yousef Saleh, manager of the contest.

An estimated one to two per cent of Jordan's 4.2 million population suffer from epilepsy, according to figures compiled by the Fund.

"This percentage is considered quite a high number in a society like ours," Saleh told the Jordan Times in an interview.

"We want to earmark revenues from the contest to help epileptics, who so far have not received the support and the attention they need."

Revenues will come from selling forms that include information on the disease for 250 fils each in addition to donations from private and public establishments.

The QAF launched the idea of contests four years ago to raise public awareness on various social issues, Saleh said.

Epilepsy is a recurrent disturbance in the brain's chemical and electrical discharges, a condition that can cause recurrent seizures, according to Abdul Kareem Qudah, medical director at the Jordan University Hospital and head of the scientific committee supervising the QAF contest.

However, factors causing such disturbances either remain unknown or are caused by factors such as stress, trauma, low sugar and calcium and lack of oxygen to the brain, as well as diseases such as meningitis.

"Epilepsy cannot be predicted, as it can happen to either sex at any age, even affecting children in the womb," Qudah said. "The seizures or electrical discharges associated with epilepsy can even be felt by a pregnant mother if her baby is affected."

However, one seizure does not necessarily indicate that a person suffers from epilepsy.

He said there were two main types of seizures: "focal," in which a person partially loses control over a function such as speech or muscle movement for a few seconds; and "generalised," in which a patient loses complete control over him/herself and is beset by shaking or stiffening accompanied by breathing difficulty.

Several patients, who spoke to the Jordan Times on condition of anonymity, said most seizures they experienced had drained their energy.

"I usually have both types and it is really something," said a male epileptic. "It lasts for a couple of minutes, and after that I feel exhausted and disoriented... sometimes I even drag myself on the floor because I feel so weak."

Several epileptics said society's generally negative attitude adds to their physical and emotional suffering.

"It seems society reacts to us in a stronger way than we react to our condition," said a female epileptic.

"It scares the hell out of people when they experience a fit for the first time," she added. "God knows how many boyfriends I have lost, some after only telling them that I suffer from epilepsy."

"Moreover, if it happens to me in the street, people just stand there and stare. I feel so alienated," she said.

Qudah said epileptics were normal people who can lead regular lives and "succeed in any of their chosen tasks."

He said many of his patients "were medical doctors or even high-ranking officials who are performing extremely well in society."

Epileptics are normally put on prescribed drugs to help control the brain's electrical discharges. In other cases, doctors resort to surgery.

"Treatment depends on the type of epilepsy," Saleh said. "In addition to pills, we have the option of surgery, which is costly, though it can be 80 per cent successful."

The price of medicine differs from one patient to another, ranging from JD16 a month to JD225, depending on the type of seizure.

Qudah said epileptics needed all the social help they could get.

"They need all the support they can get from the government, from society and from their family, as treating epilepsy needs a lot of money, effort, and time," he said.

"We hope that with this year's QAF contest, we can help raise social awareness regarding epilepsy," Saleh said. "In the long run, we hope that officials see to it that a special body is created to help meet the needs of epileptic patients, much like other associations that deal with cerebral palsy and handicapped individuals."

Over the years, the number of participants in QAF contests has grown from 175,465 in 1995 to 223,606 in 1997, indicating growing popular awareness and involvement in "issues affecting society," Saleh said.

Myanmar deports foreign activists as stand-off persists

YANGON (AFP) — Myanmar deported 18 foreign pro-democracy activists Saturday as opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi dug in for the fourth day of a roadside stand-off with the ruling military.

The visibly relieved activists arrived in Bangkok vowing they would carry on campaigning for human rights in Myanmar but said they had been well treated during their six-day detention.

They were sentenced to five years hard labour by a court in Myanmar-Friday for attempting to incite unrest, but the penalties were immediately suspended and they were ordered to be deported, diplomats said.

"We were treated like kings and queens, had wonderful living quarters, fans and air-con ... everything we wanted," U.S. student Sapna Chhattopar, 20, told reporters at Bangkok's airport.

"But it's hard to be happy when the people of Burma who have done the same things we have are still under attack."

Their release came after opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi began a fourth day in her van on a roadside near Yangon after being hounded from visiting provincial supporters.

Diplomats said the van, also carrying two drivers and an official from her National League for Democracy (NLD) party, has been towed to a bridge where she spent six days in a similar confrontation last month.

"It looks like nothing has changed and we're going through the same thing as last time, though this one could be longer," said one Western diplomat, referring to the previous stand-off which ended when the Nobel peace laureate was forcibly taken back to her

home on July 29. It is her fourth failed attempt to travel to meet provincial supporters in little over a month. The junta has said it cannot allow her to proceed further for her own safety as there are security problems in the area.

Her van is now at the scene of last month's confrontation — a small bridge some 25 kilometres outside Yangon — but this time she has brought extra supplies, diplomats said.

A junta spokesman said an ambulance was at the site and security personnel have been deployed to protect her.

In a statement Saturday, a junta spokesman added that efforts were being made to make her roadside stay comfortable as possible and that she had been provided with a tape player and Western music cassettes by Madonna and Michael Jackson.

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said Friday the stand-off with Aung San Suu Kyi had reached its "moment of truth" and that the international community needed to step up pressure on the junta.

"Aung San Suu Kyi is again asserting her basic right to move freely in her country," said Albright at a meeting in Washington with visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura.

At their trial Friday, the presiding judge in Yangon told the 18 activists they would have 90 days to appeal the jail sentence. But military authorities intervened to order a suspension and their deportation, witnesses said.

However the suspension of the sentences was conditional on the activists pledging not to violate Myanmar

law again and "refraining from acts detrimental to the people of Myanmar," said an official.

The suspension was ordered in "view of bilateral relations between Myanmar and the relevant countries," the home ministry said.

In a statement released in Bangkok Saturday, Myanmar's exiled National Council for the Union of Burma, an umbrella group of anti-junta organisations including opposition NLD cabinet ministers, condemned the sentences and deportations as unlawful.

"This evidently shows that the (junta) is interpreting and using the law to suit its own purpose," the statement said.

"We would like to affirm that we take much pride in and put on record the valiant act of the 18 friends of Burma," it said, adding it was delighted at their release.

The activists were rounded up Sunday handing out pamphlets urging people to remember the 10th anniversary of a bloody military crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators on Aug. 8, 1988.

The detainees were six U.S. nationals, three Thais, three Malaysians, three Indonesians, two Filipinos and one Australian.

The White House welcomed the release of the activists but also issued a warning to Yangon.

"While we are pleased that these American citizens will be returning to the United States, we think this ought to serve as a reminder that there is an absence of protection of basic human rights in Burma," said spokesman Michael McCurry.

The NLD won 1990 polls in Myanmar by a landslide but the junta has refused to give up power.



Thai student Chanakan Pandernvongse (left) is welcomed by her mother Kusuma upon her arrival from Yangon at Bangkok's Don Muang airport. Eighteen pro-democracy activists arrived in Thailand Saturday after a Myanmar court ordered their deportation from the country for handing out leaflets in the capital (Reuters photo)

Worry leads teenage girls to depression

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Adolescent girls are far more likely than adolescent boys to suffer from depression, possibly because they spend more time worrying more about problems in their lives, according to a study released Friday.

"Girls feel less control of their environments than boys from a very early age, and this sense of uncontrollability contributes to rumination," psychologists Susan Nolen-Hoeksema and Joan Girgus said.

"In essence, girls are frantically trying to understand what's going on in their lives and their own emotional distress, and this is manifested as rumination."

The study, which was presented to a meeting of the American Psychological Association here, said that sharply higher depression rates among teenage girls and women

may be directly linked to the habit of "rumination".

Before the age of 11, girls and boys have more or less equal rates of depressive symptoms and depressive disorders. As they grow to the age of 15, however, depression rates rise sharply among girls, while rising only slightly among boys.

Girgus and Nolen-Hoeksema said that rumination — which they describe as "passive repetitive focus on negative emotions" — looked like a probable culprit.

In a survey of 615 San Francisco area teenagers, the two psychologists asked which aspects of their lives prompted the greatest worries.

While the sexes reported roughly equal rates of concern about school, relationships with parents and future career plans, the girls reported a whole host

of other worries that hardly registered among the boys.

Among these were worries about their appearance, friends, personal problems, romantic relationships, being popular and being safe, the study said.

"The only issue that boys reported being more concerned about than girls was 'sports and other activities'," the study said.

The two psychologists said that the wide variety of concerns plaguing teenage girls could make it more difficult to treat their depression — and offered no quick fix for the problem.

"These are not easily solved issues. Many of these issues involve others and one's relationships with others are not easy to fix, and can present new challenges or concerns every day," the researchers said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Loren in New York hospital for a few days

ROME (AP) — Actress Sophia Loren is being treated for a few days at a New York hospital after falling ill on a flight from Los Angeles and will have to skip a trip to Venice next month to receive a major award, Italian news media Saturday quoted her family as saying. RAI state TV and radio and well as private Italian network Canale 5 said her family in Los Angeles Friday issued a statement blaming stress for a "light cardiovascular" problem. It said hot weather and a long delay before the flight took off for New York were also factors in Loren's falling ill. The statement, issued by the family of film producer Carlo Ponti, her husband, said Loren, who is 63, had been transferred from intensive care to a regular room and would be hospitalised for a few days. Loren won't be able to keep her appointment Sept. 3 to receive the Venice Film Festival's Golden Lion career award, the family statement was quoted as saying. It was not clear which flight Loren had taken or the exact nature of the heart problem. "She just needs rest — no more aeroplanes for a month," RAI TV quoted Ponti as saying in Los Angeles. Loren apparently had recently made several long trips, including one from her other home, in Geneva, Switzerland, to California. The family made the statement after a day of swirling rumours in the United States, including one that she had suffered a heart attack after some plastic surgery. Friday, a spokesman at the hospital where she was reportedly taken denied a report by the New York Daily News that the Italian-born Loren had suffered a heart attack and was resting comfortably at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Centre.

Passenger ship crew saves 23 Moroccan illegals lost at sea

MELILLA, Spain (AFP) — A passenger ship rescued 23 near-shipwrecked Moroccans attempting to enter Spain on the sly, Spanish officials said Saturday. The ship's crew spotted the 23 illegal immigrants, who were travelling aboard a small boat with a tiny motor, about 60 kilometres southeast of the Spanish coast. Melilla officials said. The ship's captain and crew "succeeded in saving their lives by bringing them onboard and taking care of them," officials said in a statement, adding the immigrants were in good health. The 23 Moroccans disembarked at 12:45 a.m. (22:45 GMT) Friday, when authorities took them to Melilla police headquarters, which will now deport them, according to Spanish immigration law. The Melilla government lamented "once again ... organized (illegal immigration) networks of endangering the lives of human beings." The ship that saved the immigrants was ferrying passengers from Almeria, Spain, to the Spanish enclave of Melilla, which is located on the northern coast of Africa. Illegal immigration into the Spanish enclave has become a mounting concern because of its proximity to Morocco and Algeria. Authorities Wednesday announced they would build a thick, metal wall, six kilometres long, to keep out unwanted outsiders from neighbouring Morocco. In early July, 38 Moroccan immigrants drowned on their way to Melilla, but the case was not revealed until a month later, prompting humanitarian groups, the media and the opposition to accuse the government of a cover-up. The enclave government defended itself, saying that the tragedy had occurred in Moroccan waters.

More British women prefer ironing to sex

LONDON (R) — British women would rather do the ironing than have sex in the morning. The women even rate bringing in the milk or putting on their make-up higher than early morning passion with their partner, a survey by door-to-door cosmetics firm Avon revealed Friday. Just 1.9 per cent of the 400 women polled — all aged between 25 and 65 and three quarters of them married — said they made time for sex in the morning. This compared with 4.4 per cent who opted for doing the ironing and 35 per cent for collecting the milk from the doorstep. The remainder preferred doing their make-up. The survey also found that most women still thought the most romantic thing a man could do was to hold open a door or carry their bags.

Bid goes on to recover bodies from Austrian mine collapse

VIENNA (AFP) — Efforts to retrieve the bodies of 10 miners trapped when an Austrian mine collapsed in mid-July will continue, although there are no longer any hopes of finding survivors. Economy Minister Hannes Farnleitner said. The last hope of finding survivors vanished Friday after a camera inserted into the dilapidated Lassing mine, south-west of Vienna, remained blocked at a depth of 164 metres of mud. It failed to reach the air pocket 175 metres down, the only remaining place where the miners could have survived. But the minister, quoted by the Austrian agency APA, said "efforts to recover the bodies would go on undeterred." "The power of nature stopped another miracle happening," said Farnleitner, referring to the discovery of Georg Hainzl, 24, who survived nine days under 63 metres of mud. The minister was joined by Austrian Chancellor Viktor Klima in expressing "deep sympathy" with the families of the victims of the July 17 disaster at Lassing, 185 kilometres south-west of Vienna. "I can assure you that we will respect your wishes and take all possible measures to recover the bodies of your husbands, fathers and sons," said Klima, late Friday, quoted by APA.

'Prince Charles backs Diana garden'

LONDON (R) — Britain's Prince Charles has thrown his weight behind plans to build a memorial garden as a tribute to the late Princess Diana. The Daily Mail reported Saturday. The plans to spruce up the garden around Diana's Kensington Palace home, located in an affluent part of London, have attracted criticism from local residents and critics who say Charles' former wife had no real fondness for gardens. The Daily Mail, quoting an unidentified aide to Charles, said the prince had written to Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer (finance minister) Gordon Brown, whose memorial committee proposed the 10 million pound (\$16 million) scheme, about the son of garden that Diana would have liked. Local residents have voiced fears that a 27-acre memorial garden would lure Diana mourners and tourists by the coachload, clogging the streets and spoiling the fashionable neighbourhood. Britain is preparing to mark the first anniversary of Diana's death amid intense media interest. She was killed in a high-speed car crash in Paris on Aug. 31 last year.

Taleban consolidate hold in north, claim capture of another town

KABUL (AFP) — Afghanistan's Taleban movement said Saturday its forces were consolidating sweeping gains in the north and claimed the overnight capture of a third town in Baghlan province.

The town of Doshi situated close to the crucial Salang tunnel that links the Afghan capital Kabul with the north of the country, was taken late Friday, Taleban officials told the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP).

Opposition forces fled the town after brief fighting, the Pakistan-based information service quoted Taleban officials as saying.

There was no immediate independent confirmation of the Taleban claim.

Wednesday the Islamic militia seized the key towns of Pul-i-Khumri and Nahrin in Baghlan, four days after storming into the northern

opposition stronghold of Mazar-i-Sharif.

The towns, situated around 160 kilometres north of Kabul, were held by forces of the ousted Afghan government's military strongman Ahmad Shah Massoud and Sayed Jafar Naderi, leader of a Shiite Ismaili Muslim sect.

A Taleban spokesman told AFP in Kabul the Islamic militia was still consolidating its latest sweeping gains in northern Afghanistan.

The spokesman, Abdul Hae Mutman, speaking from the Taleban base at Kandahar in southern Afghanistan, said no fresh battle was reported from the north.

"Nothing major is going on. Our forces are still cleaning up the newly-captured territory," he said.

The frontlines 25 kilometres north of the capital were also quiet. The religious

militia fighters were seen checking their heavy weapons and resting.

Local shepherds grazed their flocks close to the Taleban's tanks and farmers harvested their crops, witnesses said.

A Taleban commander in the area Friday said they had sent messages to opposition commanders on the frontlines to surrender peacefully.

Taleban's supreme leader Mulla Mohammad Omar has said the religious movement "is composed of all ethnic groups inhabiting Afghanistan and can represent the whole nation." Taleban mouthpiece Radio Shariat reported.

"The highups and the members of this movement never think on ethnic, racial and linguistic grounds, respecting all segments of the country on Islamic basis," the radio quoted him

as saying.

The Taleban movement, which emerged from Koranic schools four years ago is widely seen as a predominantly ethnic-Pashtun force. Opponents say it wants to impose Pashtun domination.

Russia has blamed the militia for ethnic massacres in Mazar-i-Sharif, a charge denied by Taleban officials.

In Iran Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi Saturday urged the Taleban to end its "banditry" in Afghanistan and bow to the wishes of the international community to form a coalition government. Iran's official IRNA news agency reported.

Taleban officials have condemned Iranian support for the opposition and called on Tehran to "mend" its policy. They also blasted Russian "interference" in Afghanistan.

Pakistan slams accusations of military aid to Taleban

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistan Saturday rejected accusations it gave military support to the Taleban and said the Islamic militia now poised to gain total control of Afghanistan posed "no threat" to any neighbouring state.

"Pakistan has not militarily assisted or interfered in Afghanistan," a foreign office spokesman said in a statement, the first formal reaction to allegations voiced in Russia, Iran and some Central Asian countries.

The spokesman said it was the anti-Taleban northern alliance that had been receiving military supplies from outside.

"It is well known how the northern alliance has kept up its operations with massive supplies of

arms and ammunition from abroad," he added.

Turning the accusations against Pakistan a "motivated propaganda" the spokesman called on the international community to "accept the realities on the ground."

"Taleban have already declared that their agenda is purely domestic and that they pose no threat to any neighbouring country," the spokesman said.

"There is no need to conjure imaginary threats," he said urging the international community to "dispassionately look at the situation in Afghanistan."

He said the international community should "engage with the Taleban so as to encourage them to preserve their domestic agenda."

U.S. balloonist breaks distance record

ST. LOUIS (R) — U.S. pilot Steve Fossett Saturday broke his own distance record for a manned balloon flight as he neared the half-way mark in his bid to become the first person to circle the world nonstop in a balloon.

His control centre at Washington University in St. Louis said Fossett was north of the coast of Australia when he reached 16,866 km at 5:30 a.m. EDT (0930 GMT), breaking his own record of 16,673.81 km set in January 1997.

"He's (Fossett) happy

and excited about it. He'll be hitting the half-way point in about one hour and a half," said Doug Blount from mission control.

The half-way point to circle the globe is about 17,702 km. Fossett is expected to fly over Perth at about 1 p.m. EDT (1700 GMT).

Fossett's combination helium and hot air balloon broke the record at an altitude of about 9,144 metres. Blount said, possibly another record for an American pilot.

His ground team said earlier that conditions

looked good for him to make the long, last reach over the South Pacific.

"At this time the longer-range projections are suggesting no weather reason not to commit beyond Australia and into the Pacific, but this decision will be our crisis day during the weekend," the team's chief meteorologist, Boh Rice, said.

The 54-year-old financial markets millionaire has maintained an altitude in excess of 8,534 metres, the highest level since the trip began a week ago in western

Argentina.

Rice said the height was crucial in order to keep the balloon in an easterly flow over the Indian Ocean and was essential earlier to enable Fossett to escape possibly tripping circular winds at lower levels.

He said it was hoped the balloon could be brought down to lower though slower levels as it passes over Australia to improve the comfort level for the pilot. The balloon is not pressurised though the capsule is heated and Fossett is on oxygen.

Australia was an important target for the balloonist because it was along the most direct route towards the South Pacific and South America and because it offered Fossett the last substantial chance to abort the mission over land should he decide he cannot make the long final leg over water.

Should he have to ditch in the ocean, his balloon capsule is designed to float and he also has a four-man life raft. His control centre said it would alert the nearest ship if he did go down

over water.

Fossett has a satellite telephone but has done nearly all of his communications via e-mail through a satellite link that produces a fax at his control centre. He has avoided using the telephone because it is a drain on the battery and takes a scientific experiment on board the craft offline when he uses it.

Fossett made three previous tries for the around-the-world mark, all of them in the northern hemisphere. The current expedition could last 18 days.

New cr docks v

NEW YORK (AP) — A

reaches reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir

reached the Mir



Workers clear up the Brenner highway linking Austria and Italy after a huge rock and mud slide which killed at least five people early Saturday when it crushed cars on the Italian side of the main highway (Reuters photo)

At least 5 dead as mudslides bury cars in northern Italy

BOLZANO, Italy (AP) — Mudslides barreling across the main highway south of the Italian-Austrian border early Saturday buried two cars, killing five German vacationers, authorities said.

Three people were slightly injured by the slides, which covered the high-speed autostrada highway, a local highway and rail tracks in a narrow point of a valley river gorge where all three routes pass.

Traffic was backed up as far as 30 kilometres into Austria from the Brenner Pass, and for kilometres on the Italian side. Rescue workers gave out water and food to stuck motorists.

All five bodies were recovered from the cars, which were buried under a

three-metre high layer of mud and rocks, RAI said.

Austria Press Agency reported that the dead were a married couple from Mainz in one car and a family with a young boy from Pinneberg, Schleswig-Holstein, in northern Germany.

One of the cars was flattened in the middle and most of its front end was missing.

Some of the rocks that tumbled down the sheer valley walls were almost as big as cars. Fallen tree trunks were so thick workers had to saw them into smaller chunks before removing them.

Injured slightly were three German tourists who sought refuge on the roof of their camper, which had been

parked near the road when the slides struck, ANSA reported.

Scene of the tragedy was just outside the town of Fortezza, about 40 kilometres south of the border, which is crossed by the Brenner Pass, one of Europe's major north-south crossing points.

Three separate mudslides were triggered shortly after midnight by a thunderstorm in the South Tyrol, or Alto Adige, in the heart of Italy's Alpine resort country.

Hundreds of firefighters and other rescuers used bulldozers and shovels to dig through tonnes of mud and using metal detectors to see if there were any other vehicles buried by the slides.

But several hours later Bolzano police said

there didn't appear to be any other bodies in the mud.

Highway authorities said that the autostrada and rail lines would not be cleared before Saturday night at the earliest. The local highway was reopened by mid-morning.

Saturday was the Aug. 15 Assumption Day religious feast day which shuts down Italy and much of the rest of Europe. Traffic is usually heaviest on the days before and after the holiday.

No trains were hit, but rerouting cost travellers several hours of delays. Buses moved travellers between Verona and the Austrian side of the border.

Italy's transport minister, who was in the area for vacation, inspected the area by helicopter.

New crew docks with Mir

MOSCOW (AP) — A fresh crew reached the Mir space station Saturday and docked successfully after a minor hitch, space officials said.

A Soyuz TM-28 ship, launched Thursday from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, carried what is expected to be the ageing station's next-to-last crew.

At the last minute, the docking was switched from automatic to manual pilot, the ITAR-TASS news agency said. It said mission controllers spotted a minor problem in the automatic docking system.

The docking was carried out 2 minutes ahead of schedule, at 2:56 p.m. Moscow time, the news agency said.

Earlier in the week, space officials had reported trouble with Mir's automatic docking system but later said the crew fixed it. The docking system has failed during previous dockings, but the crew has been able to use manual controls.

Among the arriving cosmonauts was a rookie — former national security advisor Yuri Baturin, on a

mission that was widely ridiculed as a hoax when it was first announced.

Baturin and two other cosmonauts, flight commander Sergei Avdeyev and engineer Gennady Padalka, will relieve a crew that has been on Mir since January.

The new crew is expected to remain until February. However, Avdeyev, the flight commander, might remain on the orbiter until June, when the Mir is to be discarded and lowered to Earth.

Yeltsin fired Baturin as national security advisor earlier this year without explanation. Since then, the 49-year-old official, a space physicist by training, has focused on training.

It has not been clear why Baturin was chosen. Some people have speculated that he is expected to attract attention to the struggling space programme. Baturin told reporters at Baikonur that he would like to work aboard the international space station, which is to receive its first crew next July.

U.S. study finds why snoring can kill you

WASHINGTON (R) — Dental surgeons said Saturday they had discovered why snoring can kill sometimes — it can actually cause damage to the arteries.

Snoring is usually harmless, if annoying, unless a person has a particular disorder known as sleep apnoea.

Sleep apnoea is marked by irregular breathing and snoring. Sufferers often stop breathing completely for up to several seconds. It usually affects overweight, middle-aged men and has been linked with stroke and heart disease.

A team at the University of California at Los Angeles School of Dentistry set out to see what the physical mechanism is.

Writing in the Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, they said X-rays showed it is more complicated than seems immediately obvious.

"When persons with sleep apnoea fall asleep, their tongue falls back into their throat, blocking their airway. As they struggle for breath, their blood pressure soars," Dr. Arthur Friedlander, an oral surgeon who worked on the study, said in a statement.

"We believe that this rise in blood pressure damages the inner walls of the carotid

arteries lining the sides of the neck," he added.

"Cholesterol and calcium sock to the injury sites and amass into calcified plaques, which block blood flow to the brain. The result is often a massive stroke."

Friedlander and his team took X-rays of the necks of 47 male veterans who had sleep apnoea, and compared them to the X-rays of nearly 900 other men.

Ten of the men with sleep apnoea, or 21 per cent, had hardened blockages in their carotid arteries. Only 22 of the 900 "control" volunteers — just 2.5 per cent — did.

"Our results told us that the increased stroke risk was coming from the neck, not another part of the body," said Friedlander.

He said the damage was probably extensive. "The calcium deposits are just the tip of the iceberg," he said. "The X-ray can't show the true size of the plaque, which is also made up of fat, platelets and other soft tissue."

When a person is suffering from sleep apnoea, air cannot flow in or out of the nose or mouth. Oxygen is not taken in so carbon dioxide builds to dangerous levels in the blood.

"It's like pressing a pillow over someone's face," Friedlander said.

Congo rebels accuse Kabila army of killing opponents

MUANDA, Congo (R) — Rebel leaders in the Democratic Republic of the Congo accused government forces Saturday of systematically killing opponents as they withdrew in the face of a rebel advance.

A statement from the newly formed Congolese Democratic Movement (CDM) said members of the Banyamulenge group of ethnic Tutsis were particularly being targeted in the eastern Kivu region.

Bizima Karaha, a former foreign minister who fled the capital Kinshasa two weeks ago to join the rebels, read the statement to Reuters by telephone from Goma.

CDM is the political wing of the rebel movement fighting to oust President Laurent Kabila, and has its headquarters in Goma, the capital of North Kivu province.

"The government troops are killing and looting as they withdraw to our advancing forces. They are killing anyone opposed to President Kabila but most especially people from Kivu and

the Banyamulenge group," Karaha said.

The statement was signed by CDM leaders Emile Ilunga, a long-time exile, Arthur Zahiti Ngoma, leader of a Kinshasa opposition party called the Forces for the Future, and Wamba Dia Wamba, a professor who returned to Congo last year only to flee two months later, accusing Kabila of corruption.

The latest rebellion was ignited on Aug. 2 after government troops mutinied, accusing President Laurent Kabila of corruption, mismanagement, nepotism and failure to chart out a political programme for this vast west African country.

Karaha, a physician who until recently also doubled as Kabila's chief political strategist, said the rebel group was determined to overthrow their former boss.

"We take it as a national duty, and a matter of principle that Kabila and all that he stands for be removed," he said.

Karaha predicted that

Kabila, who came to power in May 1997 on the back of a regional alliance led by Rwanda, would fall within weeks.

He said rebel forces were now advancing rapidly through the eastern Kivu region and towards the west.

In the important oil town of Muanda on the Atlantic Ocean coast, commanders said frontline units were tightening their grip on villages outside Port Matadi which was captured by rebel forces two days ago.

Matadi, 372 km from Kinshasa, is a key gateway to the capital. Muanda is also near Angola's oil-rich enclave of Kabianga.

"We are advancing, we are consolidating positions, and we should be in Kinshasa soon," Commander Muoyapenda Kayoyo, head of the rebel force at Muanda, told Reuters.

The rebels also control the naval base of Banana on the Atlantic coastline. Regional military analysts said with the collapsing military command structure in

Kinshasa, it should be easy for the rebels to slip into the city of six million people with little or no resistance.

Thursday, Kabila sacked his army chief and brother-in-law Celestine Kifwa for his conduct of the war against the rebels, officials said.

Kabila himself has not been seen in public since Wednesday and there are conflicting reports as to whether he is in Kinshasa or not. Government officials say he is.

The capital was calm Saturday, with little sign of extra military activity, although Western governments advised their nationals to leave.

Karaha also dismissed as useless a political initiative by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and regional leaders to try to end the war in the former Zaire.

"These people are going round the region talking to the wrong people. They must come and talk to us otherwise the whole exercise is useless," he said.

President's testimony should be safe from eavesdroppers

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House technicians are masters of technology that would thwart any outsiders' efforts to tap into the video transmission of President Bill Clinton's testimony to grand jurors, a communications specialist says.

The White House Communications Agency will videotape Clinton's testimony Monday afternoon and provide "a one-way live feed" to grand jurors 1.5 kilometres away at the U.S. Courthouse, presidential spokesman Mike McCurry said Friday.

Clinton will be questioned by prosecutors in the Map Room, part of the White House residence, McCurry said. He declined to provide further details about the closed-circuit TV transmission.

The grand jury is hearing testimony in Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's investigation of Clinton's

contacts with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky. The secrecy of grand jury proceedings is protected by law, although Clinton and other witnesses can talk about their own testimony if they choose.

Starr is investigating allegations of a presidential affair and cover-up.

As the day approached, Washington was filled with speculation about the prosecutors' questions and Clinton's answers. But it is unlikely anyone will find out through eavesdropping on the video feed, said Dennis Dunbar, a telecommunications specialist with 15 years' experience setting up closed-circuit TV conferences.

"It will be absolutely secure," Dunbar predicted.

The most likely scenario is the use of digital transmission cable to link the White House and the courthouse to the existing fiber optic network

beneath Washington's streets. There are thousands of underground cables, and inside each of those, thousands of lines only as thick as a human hair.

"If someone climbed in a manhole to try to find the wire, they would have literally thousands and thousands to pick from," Dunbar said.

The feed will likely go over a dedicated line carrying nothing but Clinton's transmission, lowering the chances of any kind of interception, he said.

The White House Communications Agency, created in 1942 as part of the Army Signal Corps, will almost certainly use the most sophisticated encryption technology available to scramble both the image and the sound, Dunbar said.

"WHCA is the cream of the crop — the best communications specialists the military has," he said.

Rebels agree to release crew members of bombed out ship

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — Tamil Tiger rebels said Saturday they will release all the 22 crew members of a Dubai-owned ship which was destroyed by the Sri Lankan air force.

"Arrangements are now being made to hand them over to the International Committee of the Red Cross," said a Tamil

Tiger statement faxed to The Associated Press in New Delhi.

In Colombo, the ICRC said the Tigers have agreed to release the 17 Indian crew members through it immediately and negotiations were being held for the release of the Sri Lankan members as well. Harsha Gunawardene, an

official of the ICRC, said his office established contact with the Tigers Saturday. The release was likely to take a few days because of logistical difficulties, he said.

The Indian and Sri Lankan crewmen are being held in rebel-controlled territory of Mullaitivu, 290 kilometres northeast of Colombo.

Jeep

Grand Cherokee

Laredo

JD22,900

Duty Free

3 years / 60,000km Warranty Bumper To Bumper

Al-Tewfik Automobile & Equipment Co.
(A Member of Tabbaa Group of Companies)
Showrooms - Tabbaa Commercial Center
Wash Al-Tal Str. Tel: 5621121-562220
Mahata Str. Branch Tel: 4656273

just 16, 1998
ed Fanek
I.S.
enjoy full advan-
not extended in
ess to the market
ative restrictions
is its products are
thus had no alter-
is difficult situat-
ket to American
risk than we are
ie European part.
ect that Jordan
Egypt and other
o immediate free
a far no positive
to take risks and
onomy with Arab
lea is that export
ers
alise the
wells'
ng the resignation
ater and irrigation
n and his ex-
sources in Jordan
accommodate only
apple while today
ulation of 4.0 mil-
ant is the issue of
s regarding water
a protection of the
resources Jordan
shortage. Jordan
in its own natural
ional policy
is ago. Jordan
of all persons who
illegally and have
nit to close the
d take legal action
fortunately nothing
wells form a net-
ter like the Arab
lasi plant. The
depleted by man-
ag. May be the
take action against
well licenses. Per-
sons are being
such a large
s and regular
regarding the
al resources. It
regard water
al property of
ionalise the ad-
l supervise them
in other countries.
asser Mirza, Phil
Amma
frica
rds are reported
ge sums of money
business. What
open secret that
American nation
have established
outh Africa. Na-
ibia, Liberia, Sa-
n some other
s under the pres-
sents in the
u. In fact, report-
ing "firms" have
manufacturing plant-
e it is believed to
little impact in
ness activities.
practical solution
time bomb is
new hope for
providing them
free education
programmes that
carry on a suc-
g regional agency
is also needed
true that there
cies dealing with
the country level.
the problem has
onal capacities
African agency
wer inasmuch as
wedged that there
lective efforts to
this debilitating
continent. Since
HIV/AIDS is relat-
use, there is a need
orts towards find-
means of eradicat-
direct causes of
chieving a real victo-
these two dangers

The Philippines at 100

Can Estrada take his government into more beneficial directions?

Editor's note: This is the second part of a two-part article.

By Herman Tiu Laurel

The centennial presidential elections

In June of this year, the Philippines celebrated the Centennial of its Independence. It has been a year of pomp and pageantry culminating in the parades and fireworks that were held on the day, simultaneous with the traditional inauguration of a new president. This was also the year of the election of the 13th president for the 12th Republic of the Philippines (the Commonwealth period being an exception). The distinction and honour of being the Centennial president, therefore, is shared by two presidents, Fidel V. Ramos and his successor to govern for the next six years, Joseph "Erap" Estrada.

On May 11, 1998, elections for the Centennial President pitted nine candidates. The tenth, Imelda Marcos, withdrew at the last minute in favour of Joseph "Erap" Estrada. Fidel V. Ramos could not run again because of the six-year term limits written into the 1987 Constitution. Ramos chose the lacklustre and widely disliked House Speaker Jose de Venecia to be his candidate over two other aspirants: Venecia was seen as having a huge advantage, considering the use of government resources and machinery in the campaign. This choice was to become a major strategic error, for Ramos gave up the hugely popular candidate from the Senate, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who was giving Estrada a run for his money, trailing in the popularity polls only by a few points to Estrada's 30 per cent ratings. Ramos's rejection of his military ward and defence secretary, Renato de Villa, split the administration party. Arroyo eventually ran for vice president and won a larger majority than Estrada, while Renato de Villa lost miserably.

Estrada was the early front-runner in the year-long campaign, but a few major obstacles stood in his way. One was the stand he had taken during the 1991 national debate against the continuance of the American military facilities in the Philippines. Political pundits still believe that no Philippine candidate for presidency can win without some form of blessing from the American establishment. Likewise, the Philippine business establishment, represented by the exclusive Makati Business Club, was firmly against Estrada for his perceived anti-Makati attitude and overly pro-poor personality.

Estrada's campaign battle cry was "Erap para sa Mahirap." The word erap is a contraction of the Spanish comrade, meaning "partner," to pare, and then inverted to "erap." It is a quaint localisation coined decades ago, that has since become synonymous with Estrada's public persona. Mahirap is Filipino for the poor people, and "Erap para sa Mahirap" literally meant: "Estrada for the Poor." Even the upstart rich, such as Filipino-Chinese and native-Filipino businesses, are considered by the Makati Business Club as among the mahirap. To remove the opposition, Estrada campaign

organisers visited American conservative political bastions in the U.S. and named 40 advisers from the business sector, some of them from the Makati Business Club.

Programmes for government, party platform, and economic policies did not figure as prominently in the campaign, as the star quality of the candidates. The movie actor Estrada won with 40 per cent of the vote and a 5.7 million-vote lead over Jose de Venecia, while Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (a look-alike of the most popular female Filipino singer Nora Aunor) won the vice presidential race with a margin of 6.3 million votes over Estrada's running mate, Angara. Among the 12 winning senatorial candidates were two movie stars, two television celebrities, and one basketball star, none of whom stand for any recognisable ideological or programmatic principle. The more substantial winning candidates are Senators Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel, a centrist candidate, and Rodolfo Biazon, a defender of the Republic against the several coup attempts by rightist "putschists" during the Aquino administration.

The 'new' Estrada administration

Upon assuming office on July 1, 1998, President Joseph "Erap" Estrada discovered the first dismaying fact. This government he was inheriting immediately faced a budget deficit of P26 billion in a budget of P540 billion. As the first week unfolded, he discovered that this deficit would grow to P70 billion by the end of 1998, or 20 per cent of the national budget. Just two weeks before the inauguration, when it was already clear that he would be president, the IMF and World Bank announced they would be withholding \$1.2 billion and \$500 million of loans respectively until assurances of compliance with the liberalisation programme were given. Estrada's advisers have been reiterating assurances to the IMF-WB tandem ever since, such as liberalisation of Philippine retail trade that will dislocate 500,000 jobs and small-scale entrepreneurs.

Like Cory Aquino and Ramos before him, Estrada has found himself compelled to make obeisance to his foreign debt. Proposals for putting controls on portfolio "hot" investments, such as the equivalents of the U.S. Tohlin Tax proposal, have been opposed by the Bankers' Association of the Philippines and followed by the Erap economic managers. Likewise, the privatisation of 11 major profit-making government assets such as the National Power Corp. and its \$500 million share in the hugely profitable electricity distribution company, Meralco. Other assets for disposal are the Philippine National Bank (reportedly offered to George Soros), Philippine National Construction Co. (operating profitable tollways), Philippine National Oil Co., Philippine Phosphate, Philippine Domestic Satellite, and the broadcast companies IBC-13 and RPN 9. These are expected to cover P 29 billion of the budget deficit.

Into the second week of the Estrada administration, the deregulation principle, which began with Aquino and

accelerated under Ramos, took its toll on the Filipino consumer once again. Socially sensitive petroleum products were fully deregulated on July 17, which will lead to increase in prices for kerosene, liquefied petroleum gas, and regular gasoline, despite declining world oil prices. Deregulation of the major metropolitan water services were completed under the Ramos administration; the two private water services companies have since petitioned for a 100 per cent rate increase, attributing the need to the currency crisis. Only intense opposition from the public has forestalled the increases.

Two weeks into the Estrada administration, the National Census and Statistics office reported that the top 10 per cent of the nation's families increase their share of the economic pie by 4.5 per cent, further widening the already wide gap between the rich and the poor. These are random samplings of the problems facing the Estrada government over the next six years. They seem to be a mosaic of the same old problems that faced all previous Philippine presidents. The "new" administration is turning out to look very much like the old administrations.

former Congressman Antonio Cerilles was named. For the all-important Secretary of Agriculture, where most of the government resources will be directed in the coming years, a nominee from the Angara faction, former Sen. William Dar, was appointed. Angara was Estrada's losing vice presidential candidate, and, since Marcos' time, legal counsel for most transnational corporations in the Philippines. President Estrada has concurrently assumed the post of secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government in charge of all local officials and the Philippine National Police.

Television personality Orlando Mercado, a former Senator with a populist bent, who vored against the renewal of the U.S. bases, but with no distinct political ideology, and Estrada's presidential campaign manager, is Secretary of National Defence. One of his first initiatives has been to reverse himself on the issue of U.S. military presence with regard to the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), which, among other issues, would lead the government to possible violation of the Philippine Constitution's provision banning the presence of any form of nuclear armaments on Philippine territory.

impetus to the land reform programme, which faces tough opposition from the conservative business and landlord class elements in Estrada's own party.

Others are: Dr. Leonor Briones, an economics professor at the University of the Philippines (UP) and former leader of the anti-IMF Freedom from Debt Coalition, who heads the Treasury Department. Unlike the U.S. Treasury Secretary, who is the most powerful figure in U.S. government finance, almost co-equal to the U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman, the Treasury Department in the Philippines is there just to keep and disburse funds. Briones will have no official policy role. Dr. Karina David, another activist, was appointed head of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, the superbody for government housing programmes. Ex-national democratic priest Edicio de la Torre has been appointed head for the TESDA, a government technical training centre.

It is too early to say if these appointments will make any serious difference in the conduct of the new Estrada administration from the previous Philippine governments. Past administrations since Marcos' time also had taken appointments from the ranks of reformists and reformed revolutionaries. The former head of the New People's Army, Bernabe Buscayno, had joined the Ramos government and the former head of the radical youth organisation Kahataan Makabayan (National Youth) had joined government during Marcos' time. What the appointment of the likes of Briones and others indicates is the potential for a shift in financial and economic policies in the future, if opportunities arise. At the very least, some appointees have been trying to present the LaRouche analysis of the ongoing global financial debacle to members of the Estrada government.

Estrada's 12-point government programme

While it is difficult to make any clear distinction between the policies of the past and the new administration, the latter has attempted to present a programme of government for its first 100 days to help identify its initiatives. To quote the salient points directly from the programme: "1) Immediately restore confidence at home and abroad in our commitment and capability to continue the basic free market policies of the outgoing administration; 2) reassure the poor that they will no longer be marginalised from economic and political life, through sustainable social safety net programmes and responsive governance; 3) order the immediate arrest of the most notorious criminals and drug pushers; 4) strengthen the presence of the office of the president in each of the three major regions (Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao); 5) ask Congress to restore the presidential power to reorganise the entire national government; 6) ask Comelec to computerise its entire operations for the elections of 2001; 7) create a Presidential Commission on Constitutional Reforms that will identify other necessary government reforms for which we

must amend our Constitution; 8) will work with Congress to scrap the pork barrel; 9) order the immediate privatisation of the largest government corporations; 10) reduce market interest rates in order to stimulate new investment from domestic and foreign sources; 11) keep inflation rate below five per cent; 12) restore the market's confidence in our ability to manage the budget deficit."

A point-by-point review of these salient features points to an expected failure by the new administration. Basic "free market" policies are continuing to undermine not only the Philippines financial and economic system, but the global system itself. The budget deficit precludes any success for improved social safety nets, since there will be little or no money for it. Many are already alarmed that the amendments to the Constitution being identified at this early stage refer to lifting the principle of "protection of national patrimony," thereby opening the Philippine economy to foreign raiders. The withdrawal of the "pork barrel" will immediately withdraw resources from the grassroots, and along with the "privatisation" of state assets, it is actually compelled by the budget deficits.

The reduction of interest rates will likely fail when faced with currency instability and speculation, while the five per cent inflation target of point 11 has already been defeated by the 10.8 per cent surge in inflation for the first half of 1998. Finally, the budget deficit is going to be filled only by the infusion of \$2 billion new loans and a host of new taxes that will only increase the burden on the Filipino. The other points we did not touch on are motherhood statements that need not be tackled.

One fundamental issue, which other ASEAN states are tackling, but on which we find nothing in the Estrada programme, is the economic foreign policy initiative. At the recent Bangkok "Can Thailand Be Saved?" conference, Chulalongkorn University economist Somkiet Osathanugrah took the starting point on Thailand's problem as the "contagion model," and saw the need for Thailand to pursue a new foreign policy thrust, including great infrastructure projects to build out of the current depression. Such a thrust is aimed at new arrangements in the global financial and economic system that would help resolve internal ASEAN economic problems, what has been called by some as "new architecture," and what the LaRouche movement calls the New Brezon Woods. There is no such economic and foreign policy vision in Estrada's programme. Without that, we see little likelihood of change in Philippine government to more beneficial directions. However, latest indications from the presidential office, Malacanang, are that all options remain open.

The writer is publisher and editor of the Independent Review, as well as a newspaper columnist and radio talk-show host in Manila.

— Executive Intelligence Review

While it is difficult to make any clear distinction between the policies of the past and the new administration, the latter has attempted to present a programme of government for its first 100 days to help identify its initiatives.

The Estrada cabinet

The establishment and conservative elements are undoubtedly powerful. Former Congressman Ronaldo Zamora, representing banking, mining, and traditional political interests, holds the position of the Little President, that of executive secretary. However, even Zamora has expressed opposition to further liberalisation of the agricultural sector seeing how the policy has punished Filipino farmers. Banker Edgar do Espiritu is secretary of the Department of Finance, controlling finance, tax, and customs, and has publicly vowed to stay within IMF-WB prescriptions. Dr. Benjamin Diokno, a neo-liberal economist from the University of the Philippines, who already proposed in 1996 to devalue the peso, was named budget secretary. Another neo-liberal and monetarist economist from the same school, Dr. Felipe Medalla, who championed the IMF tariff liberalisation and tax reforms, was appointed to head the National Economic Development Authority, in charge of economic policy. For Bangko Sentral ng Philipinas, the old governor, Gabriel Singson, was retained, apparently at the behest of the Bankers' Association of the Philippines and the IMF.

At the Secretary of Trade and Industry, Jose Pardo, 7-Eleven convenience store Philippine franchisee, was appointed. For the secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, a lawyer, who has represented loggers,

As part of the VFA, joint Philippine-U.S. military exercises would mean entry of U.S. naval vessels, which do not allow inspection and carry a policy to neither confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons on board. Mercado, however, will reduce the risk of military careerism rising in the department. The post of National Security Adviser, however, went to former military vice-chief of staff and Ramos's executive secretary, Alexander Aguirre.

One is tempted to identify the hopes for a change in the administration's policies by pointing out certain non-establishment personalities appointed to the cabinet. Foremost among these is Horacio "Boy" Morales. A former Marcos technocrat in charge of the training school for government bureaucrats called the Development Academy of the Philippines, Morales turned communist and fought the Marcos regime. He was eventually arrested and imprisoned for subversion. Prior to Marcos, Morales was involved in rural development, a task he returned to upon being released from prison, which earned him the leadership of the "popular" faction of the leftist National Democratic Front.

The faction became known as the "popular democrats," identified as a reformist wing of the radical left, which eventually accepted such principles as "civil society." Much of the hope for reform in the cabinet as secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform. He is expected to give more

U.S. appeals court gives 'Big Tobacco' major victory

By Tom Campbell
Reuters

RICHMOND, Virginia — In a major victory for U.S. tobacco companies, a federal appeals court has ruled that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration did not have jurisdiction to regulate tobacco products, reversing a lower court decision.

The ruling derails the Clinton administration's bid to cut youth smoking through increased regulation. "It's a huge victory for tobacco lawyers," said Bill Novelli, president for the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, a Washington health advocacy group.

A three-judge panel of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, with one judge dissenting, said the FDA overstepped its authority when it issued sweeping regulations in August 1996 that restricted the sale of tobacco products to minors and limited advertising and marketing by tobacco companies.

"We are thus of the opinion that Congress did not intend to delegate jurisdiction over tobacco products to the FDA. Accordingly, the decision of the district court is reversed," the appellate court said.

It reversed a controversial April 23, 1997, decision by North Carolina U.S. District Judge William Osteen, who ruled that the FDA could regulate nicotine as a drug and tobacco product as drug-delivery devices but had no authority to restrict tobacco advertising.

The Justice Department said it would appeal the decision, while the tobacco industry said in a statement it was "pleased" by the ruling and "remains firmly committed to taking meaningful steps to reduce under-age tobacco use."

"The ruling is likely to increase pressure on Congress to adopt tobacco legislation to reduce youth smoking, according to state attorneys general who are in continuing talks with the industry. Congress has all but given up on drafting a comprehensive tobacco bill before adjourning in October."

"Until the Supreme Court imposes some common sense on this issue, action by Congress is our last hope," said Massachusetts Attorney General Scott Harshbarger, whose state has sued the industry seeking to recover costs of treating ill smokers.

"Until then, big tobacco will continue to operate above the law and refuse to allow its products to be regulated as the dangerous and addictive substances that they are," he said.

In a setback for health advocates who had urged broad FDA regulation of the tobacco industry, the appeals court said the case was not about regulating youth smoking but instead centred on "who has the power to make this type of major policy decision." "The FDA has exceeded the authority granted to it by Congress, and its rule-making action cannot stand," the judges said.

Appellate Judge Kenneth Hall, in

his lone dissent, said the FDA should be allowed to regulate a product "estimated to cause some 400,000 deaths a year," especially since its rules were aimed at reducing youth smoking. "Inasmuch as cigarettes and smokeless tobacco are responsible for illness and death on a vast scale, FDA regulations aimed at curbing tobacco use by children cannot possibly be contrary to the general intent of the (law)," he wrote.

The FDA's rules, designed to reduce under-age smoking, have been on hold while the case worked its way through the courts.

The appeals court initially heard arguments in the case in August 1997, but a ruling was delayed after the death of one of the original judges on the three-judge panel.

The case was reheard in Charleston, West Virginia, in June. Tobacco stocks were largely unchanged as Wall Street digested the dense 59-page ruling released on a Friday summer afternoon, but they were expected to move higher on the news.

"I take the view that markets are relatively efficient and over a period of time, the marketplace is going to reflect the overwhelmingly favourable tone of the recent legal and regulatory developments," David Adelman, an analyst for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, said.



Murad urges government not to widen sales tax base

AMMAN (J.T.) — Haidar Murad, president of the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, said Saturday that instead of expanding the sales tax base, the government should find alternatives for covering the drop in revenues that would result from exempting industrial production inputs from duties.

Sources at the Department of Customs estimated a revenue shortfall of JD 84 million a year from the aforementioned exemptions.

A committee in charge of studying the issue of industrial inputs suggested that the revenue shortfall be covered from sales tax through reducing the minimum sales requirement from JD100,000 to JD 50,000 in the first phase and then to JD 30,000 in the second phase.

The committee also suggested that the second phase of the sales tax law, which imposes tax on all industrial and commercial product as well as services, be implemented.

Commenting on these suggestions, Murad said the second phase can only be implemented by a new law. He referred in this context to an agreement reached between the government and the private sector when the first phase of the sales tax was adopted several years ago.

Murad said the current situation in Jordan and the standard of living level do not encourage expanding the sales tax base.

"Traders in the local markets are already complaining of recession, and consumers are complaining about the declining purchasing power because of the rising prices of various commodities and services," he said adding that any expansion in the sales tax base will lead to further price hikes and will, consequently, contribute to prolonging the recession.

Murad, however, welcomed the government's steps to exempt industrial production

inputs from customs duties, saying that it will contribute to reducing the production costs, improve quality of local products and enable them to compete with imported products.

Moreover, he said, it will lead to increasing investment and production and create more job opportunities for Jordanians. "These altogether will contribute positively to enhancing the national economy," the commerce chief stressed.

He indicated that higher productivity, sales and exports will bring additional income to the treasury, thus replenishing any shortfall in customs revenues.

Murad said there are always valid alternatives for covering any shortfall, noting in this regard that the Lebanese government's revenues have increased significantly when the government reduced the sales tax ceiling to 10 per cent. "This can happen in Jordan too," he emphasised.

ILO survey reveals extent of violence at work

GENEVA (AFP) — France, Argentina, Romania, Canada and England have the highest reported rates of assault and sexual harassment in the workplace, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has said.

While violence in the workplace is a universal phenomenon, certain jobs carry a higher risk, the ILO report says. Taxi-drivers, health care workers, teachers, social workers, domestic staff employed overseas and people who work alone, notably in shops and service stations open at night, are among the most vulnerable. Women are particularly at risk.

The ILO says its survey, "Violence at Work" by Duncan Chappell and Vittorio Di Martino, is the most extensive world study of violence in the workplace.

It says around a thousand people are killed at work each year in the United States.

The report looked at both physical and psychological violence, including intimidation and bullying.

"The new profile of violence at work which emerges is one which gives equal emphasis to physical and psychological behaviour, and one which gives full recognition to the significance of minor acts of violence," said Mr. Di Martino.

The ILO said comparisons between different countries was difficult because of a lack of statistics. Researchers drew on previous studies including a wide-ranging 1996 report which questioned workers from 32 countries on their perceptions of how they were treated at work.

They also used statistics from the International Crime (Victim) Survey.

Statistics showed French staff where the most frequent victims of violence at work, with 11.2 per cent of men and 8.9 per cent of women saying they had faced violence of some kind in 1996. Almost 20 per cent of women said they had faced sexual harassment.

Other worst-hit countries were Argentina where six per cent of men

and 12 per cent of women were victims of violence and 16.6 per cent of women sexually harassed, Romania (8.7 per cent, 4.1 per cent and 10.8 per cent) and Canada (3.9 per cent, five per cent and 9.7 per cent).

In England and Wales 3.2 per cent of men were victims, 6.3 per cent of women and 8.6 per cent of women faced sexual harassment.

Figures for the United States were one per cent for men, 4.2 per cent for women and 5.3 per cent of women sexually harassed.

A 1996 study by the European Union among workers in its 15 member states found that four per cent of employees, some six million people, had suffered physical violence at work during the previous year.

It also found three million people suffered sexual harassment and 12 million were victims of intimidation and bullying.

The ILO said the new study proved intimidation was a real problem in the workplace. It said in Britain 53 per cent of employees said they had been a victim of intimidation and as many as 78 per cent said they had witnessed acts of bullying.

A report in Finland, cited by the ILO, showed 40 per cent of victimised workers suffered severe stress.

The ILO said violence at work carried enormous direct and indirect costs including in lost hours and in beefing security.

In the United States the total cost to employers of violence in the workplace was more than \$4 billion in 1992, according to figures from the National Safe Workplace Institute.

In Germany, the direct cost of psychological violence in a company with 1,000 employees is put at around \$112,000 a year, the study says.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 16/08/99 17:37

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	HKD	SGD
US Dollar	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
DE Mark	0.6562	1.0000	0.3429	0.8367	81.15	0.5418	0.6812	1.1278
GB Sterling	1.6178	2.9145	1.0000	2.4579	236.66	2.4534	2.7742	3.2898
CH Franc	0.6562	1.0000	0.4097	1.0000	97.01	1.0189	1.1761	1.3488
JP Yen	0.0088	1.2310	0.4222	1.0300	1.0000	1.0386	1.182	1.3285
CA Dollar	0.6562	1.2816	0.4222	1.0366	1.04	1.0000	1.1761	1.3488
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0136	0.3477	0.8488	1216.16	0.8538	1.143	1.3377
NL Guilder	0.4924	0.885	0.3041	0.7420	71.96	0.7485	0.8748	1.0177
FR Franc	0.1656	0.2582	0.1023	0.2497	24.20	0.2511	0.283	0.3300

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	IRR	EGP
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7090	3.7507	0.5770	3.6400	0.3073	3.6725	1018.00	3.4220
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	1.0000	5.2901	0.5317	5.1340	0.4334	5.1798	2141.04	4.8285
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.1880	1.0000	0.1006	0.97	0.0819	0.98	404.72	0.9124
Bahrain Dinar	2.86	1.8806	9.9488	1.0000	9.86	0.5151	9.74	4028.43	9.7759
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0304	1.0304	1.0000	0.8844	1.01	417.03	0.9401
Kuwait Dinar	3.2541	2.3072	12.2053	1.2288	1.185	1.196	1.196	4939.80	0.9401
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1931	1.0213	1.0213	0.9912	0.8837	1.00	413.34	0.9318
Lebanese 1000	0.68	0.4671	2.4708	0.2484	2.3979	0.2024	2.4193	1.00	2.2843
Egyptian	0.2822	0.2072	1.0861	0.1102	1.0637	0.0888	1.0732	443.80	1.00

Oil	Last	Review
Brent	0.00	0.00
W. Texas	13.37	13.41
Bonny	0.00	0.00
Dubai	12.63	11.59
U.S. Gas	133.00	132.00

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4803	0.1648	0.40203	38.0061
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.49083	0.16831	0.41089	38.8369
KW Dinar	3.2541	5.86166	2.01167	4.90677	476.19
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.77783	1.63961	4	382.048
CY Pound	1.3645	3.394	1.1641	2.8383	275.608

Metal	Old	Offer
Gold (oz's)	283.85	284.35
Silver (oz's)	5.15	5.18
Platinum (oz's)	370	372
AL (3 Months)	1327	1329
CU (3 Months)	1625	1630
Zinc (3 Months)	1041	1042
Lead (3 Months)	530	533
NI (3 Months)	4145	4185

Period	1-3	3-6	6-12	1-5
Ctry	Month	Month	Month	Year
USD	5.6445	5.6875	5.7188	5.7481
GBP	7.8875	7.7385	7.7305	7.6719
JPY	0.5889	0.5883	0.5882	0.5882
DEM	3.4888	3.5000	3.5280	3.5757
FRF	3.5000	1.7969	1.9297	2.0313
CHF	1.7188	3.8828	3.8280	3.7988
ITL	0.0200	4.8840	4.8260	1.00

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pt Cls
New York	DOW JONES	8425	-34.5	-0.41	8556.57	8380.72	8480.5
New York	S&P 500	1062.75	-12.16	-1.13	1083.92	1057.22	1074.91
London	FT-SE 100	5455	55.5	1.03	5617.5	5434.9	5398.5
Tokyo	Nikkei 225	18123.93	-288.09	-1.58	18355.1	18048.5	18382
Paris	CAC 40	3984.91	43.22	1.09	4024.27	3973.11	3981.88
Frankfurt	DAX	5447.9	91.67	1.71	5483.16	5355.4	5385.23

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lb)	117.58	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1863	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	281.4	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	98	Spot
Soya (c/lb)	23.96	Spot
Tea (c/lb)	125	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1447	1.1504
DE Mark	0.3928	0.3948
CH Franc	0.4688	0.4712
FR Franc	0.1171	0.1177
JP Yen	0.4838	0.486
NL Guilder	0.3482	0.3499
IT Lira	0.3981	0.4001

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Banker sees possibility of dinar appreciating

AMMAN (Petra) — Jawad Hadid, the general manager of the Arab Banking Corporation (Jordan) and member of the International Visa board of directors Saturday lauded Jordan's economic reform programme, saying that it has contributed to restoring balance to the national

economy, and enhancing international confidence in it.

In a lecture to a Rotary Amman and Rotary Philadelphia meeting, Hadid said Jordan has succeeded, through implementing its economic reform programme, to increase its foreign currency

reserve from JD50 million prior to launching the programme to 1.6 billion at present.

This, he said, has contributed to stabilising the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar against the dollar and proved its ability to stand in the face of the speculations in the last few weeks. Hadid indicated that the programme has contributed to reducing Jordan's foreign debt from \$5.5 billion in 1989 to \$6.5 billion now. "The inflation rate has also dropped to low rates and foreign assistance and investments have increased," he said noting that Jordan has received more than \$1 billion worth of European aid, half of which are in the form of grants.

Since the launch of the programme, a total of \$1 billion of Jordan's foreign debt has been written off.

This has contributed to a real increase in deposits and foreign currency flows, Hadid told the audience, which included bank directors and businessmen.

"Even if the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar is liberalised, it will not lead to a drop in its exchange rate. On the contrary, it might lead to an increase," Hadid emphasised.

FURNISHED APARTMENT FOR RENT

3rd floor level, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, dining, sitting, large living area, fully equipped kitchen. Annual lease, in a prime location in Rabiah area.

Tel.: 5512884

COOL & AFFORDABLE

Cheers TO TOP ALL CHEERS BE THERE!!

1st. Café @ Turino
Sweifiyeh 5863944

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- 1 Hairless
- 2 Nodded violin maker
- 3 Pass over
- 4 Soothing lotion
- 5 Supply the food
- 6 Actress Yvonne
- 7 Old-time public vehicles
- 8 Spoken
- 9 Tiller's tool
- 10 Othello and others
- 11 By oneself
- 12 "Circle of Friends" star
- 13 Ferocious
- 14 Flight schedule abbr.
- 15 Pamphlet
- 16 Fencer's sword
- 17 Mineral spring
- 18 Extinct bird
- 19 Meas. across
- 20 Monster
- 21 Titled
- 22 Glass container
- 23 Lids in
- 24 Rodio fan's encouragement
- 25 Eastern rulers
- 26 Dispatch boat
- 27 Contagious malady, briefly
- 28 Academic grade
- 29 Highway interchange
- 30 "A Death in the Family" writer
- 31 Marcus or Irwin
- 32 Hedgepodge
- 33 Nudnik
- 34 Middle measurement
- 35 Early car maker

DOWN

- 1 Crushing blow
- 2 Choir voice
- 3 Traditional wisdom
- 4 One of the Tweedies?
- 5 Start of a play
- 6 Georgia city
- 7 Video-game company
- 8 Brief
- 9 Tax letters
- 10 Impassive
- 11 Imperial Russian Ballet, today
- 12 Vacuous
- 13 Less colored
- 14 Political refugee
- 15 Gallery display
- 16 West and Murray
- 17 Profound
- 18 Nob Hill cops: abbr.
- 19 Jail
- 20 Passport stamp
- 21 Easter item
- 22 Part of mph
- 23 Aloft
- 24 Parlat: pref.
- 25 Pound or Frost
- 26 Additional conjunctions
- 27 Standard, briefly
- 28 Homebound
- 29 Ill-smelling
- 30 Yanked
- 31 Loser to DDE
- 32 Away
- 33 Post fresh troops
- 34 Plummeted
- 35 back (relaxed)
- 36 E.T.-piloted vehicles
- 37 Crow's call
- 38 Old card game

Peanuts

HERE'S THE WORLD WAR I FLYING ACE CROSSING NO MAN'S LAND TO VISIT HIS BROTHER SPIKE.

HI, SPIKE. HOW ARE THINGS IN THE TRENCHES?

NOT QUITE WHAT I EXPECTED.

THE FIRST THING I NOTICED WHEN I GOT HERE IS THERE AREN'T ANY DRINKING FOUNTAINS.

Andy Capp

YOU-NOO! IT'S ME AGAIN!

PUT THE KETTLE ON, AND JUST PERFORM THIS WASHING-UP-THE LIFE.

YOU'VE LEFT THE KETTLE ON, AND JUST PERFORM THIS WASHING-UP-THE LIFE.

IT RINGS IN THE TRENCHES, AND LEAVES IT RINGING.

Mutt'n'Jeff

YOU'RE TEACHING YOUR DOG, BRUNO, TO DRIVE YOUR SPORTS CAR?

YEH, AND HE'S DOING BEAUTIFULLY!

THAT'S SILLY! DOESN'T HE GET CAR SICK?

NAW!

BUT I DO WHEN THE INSURANCE PAYMENTS ARE DUE!

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen

PIERCING FAST AND EASY

"If I get my tongue pierced, some of my food will fall through the hole and I'll lose weight."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ARSYC

MELIP

TELMAD

CLIPES

Answer: "COSTLY, MILE, DANCE, PILE"

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: "COSTLY"

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Hamaneh highlights deficiencies, negative effects of economic adjustment programme

IN A lecture he delivered at the Communist Party offices in Amman, Economics Professor Munir Hamaneh blamed the economic adjustment programme for rising poverty and unemployment. "If studies confirm that 27 per cent of Jordanian families lived below the JD119 absolute poverty line in 1992, many studies also assert that 4 per cent of Jordanian families lived below the poverty line in 1996," he stressed.

Hamaneh emphasised that 45 per cent of the families in Jordan receive a monthly income of no more than JD150 which is estimated to be the minimum poverty line in 1996. "Even the World Bank acknowledges that the number of poor people has tripled during the past ten years until the mid-90s," he said.

The lecturer added that the adjustment programme has failed on the unemployment front. "The official data saying that the jobless rate has dropped in 1996 is not convincing and not factual," he said. "When some studies indicate that the unemployment rate is over 25 per cent and could be even 27 per cent, the official estimates of around 15 per cent cannot be acceptable."

Hamaneh spoke about the "external sector's contribution" in easing the pressure on the balance of payments and concluded that the development policies based on export strategy and globalisation have not succeeded. "Not only have they failed but they have brought opposite effects that would prolong the financial dependence on the outside world and intensify the factors that hinder independent national development," the lecturer said.

He also saw the problems of external

indebtedness as another area where the economic adjustment programme has failed. Noting that the debt was about \$7.6 billion in 1990 and that it amounted to more than \$6.6 billion on Oct. 31, 1997, Hamaneh said: "It is noteworthy to mention that the reduction in the amount of external debt is about equal to the debts that were written off."

The professor added that debt rescheduling has widened the opportunity to deepen the trade deficit which has been increasing over the past years. He told the audience that the external debt rose sharply in 1989 then declined at a slow pace in the following years until 1993. Since 1994 until now the foreign debt has been continuously going up, he said.

In this context, Hamaneh indicated that the debt service payments have eaten up around 25 per cent of the budget over the past years. He estimated the debt service payments to total JD515 million this year, an amount that equals around 26 per cent of the budget. According to Hamaneh, debt service payments amounted to JD434 million in 1997 and JD520 million in 1996.

The last area that was blasted by Hamaneh was the high interest rate which he saw as a factor that reduced borrowing for investment purposes and contributed to "increasing the siege on local production." He concluded by blaming the financial and monetary policies for high prices, reduction in demand for local products, decline in competitiveness of local goods and lower export capacity. "This has exacerbated the trade deficit and led to an outflow of investments," he said (Al Dustour).

Women are big players in global market — and getting bigger

LONDON (AP) — Women own between a quarter and a third of all businesses worldwide. In the European Union, one-third of new businesses are being started by women. And in the United States, more than 7.7 million women-owned businesses are now generating \$2.3 trillion in revenue.

The message from the 400 women from 73 countries who attended the fifth Global Summit of Women in the Americas was that women are big economic players in the global market — and will become even bigger players in the 21st century.

"Global markets and women are not often used in the same sentence," said Irene Naftal, the summit director, who chairs the U.S. National Commission on Working Women. "But

increasingly, statistics show that women have economic clout — most visibly as entrepreneurs and most powerfully as consumers."

Participants reflect the growing global power of women: Many are company owners, top executives, corporate board members, politicians and heads of voluntary organisations.

Women wage earners represent 30 per cent to 40 per cent of the global workforce, Naftal said, and as their numbers increase so does their earning power "with the result that women consumers are affecting the fate of many companies by what they decide to buy."

Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, director of the U.N. Development Programme's Human Development Report, said that

an increasing number of women are getting around discrimination in the workplace and closed doors in the corridors of political and corporate power by becoming entrepreneurs.

"And the growing economic power and influence of women-owned businesses are changing the shape of the global economy," she said.

"Four out of 10 women business leaders are currently involved in the international marketplace. This is a new trend — a survey shows about half only became involved within the last year. And nearly half of those not yet involved say they have plans to do so in the next three years," Fukuda-Parr said.

The biggest potential for women's economic power in the 21st century lies in the

growing number of women entrepreneurs and the increasing clout of women in a consumer-driven world, she said.

Ann Sherry, general manager of human resources at Bank of Melbourne-Westpac Banking Corp., one of Australia's largest financial institutions, said it's time for women to recognise "that we are in the early days of a genuine 'girl power' revolution."

"Over the next 10 years, we will witness the full unfolding in our societies of women as significant, and in many areas, decisive economic actors," she said. "The challenge we now face is a great one. How shall we choose to use our new woman power?"

"Women have enormous power to wield as consumers, investors, shareholders, superannuation fund holders and as

a big part of the employee community. Today, women make choices that can make or break national and local institutions — from companies to governments," she said.

Sherry urged women to start influencing the policies and directions of corporations to get better products and services, to exert political power and reshape national and international institutions to ensure their interests and values are reflected.

Baroness Jean Denon, a member of Britain's House of Lords and former Northern Ireland trade minister, said women should use their power not to move up existing corporate ladders, but to change organisations "to the benefit of women from top to bottom — and I think that will be to the benefit of the world."

Jordanian exhibition in Kenya opens

NAIROBI (J.T.) — The second Jordanian industrial exhibition was opened here Friday with the participation of 25 companies.

The exhibition, which is organised by the Jordan Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation lasts until Aug. 17.

Abdul Karim Omar, head of the Jordanian delegation, said that despite the latest bomb blasts in the Kenyan capital, several Kenyan officials and businessmen visited the exhibition.

Omar stressed Jordan's keenness to enhance bilateral economic relations with Kenya.

"Jordan is always looking forward to establishing strong ties with African states," he said adding that "the Jordanian and Kenyan markets have great potentials."

The visitors have opened direct contacts with the representatives of Jordanian companies to sign contracts that will enable Kenya and other African states to import several Jordanian products at competitive prices.

Kenyan Trade and Industry Minister Qassem Owajid visited the exhibition Saturday and was briefed on the Jordanian industries on display.

On the other hand, a delegation representing Kenyan Chambers of Industry and Commerce were briefed on the international specifications and their competitive prices.

On display are plastic utensils, electric appliances, pharmaceuticals, clothing, foodstuffs in addition to artifacts.

Feeble trade between Oman and Israel likely to worsen

MUSCAT (AFP) — Trade between Oman and Israel totalled less than \$500,000 in 1997, an Omani government report said Tuesday.

Israeli goods accounted for \$480,360, or 0.009 per cent, of Oman's imports last year. Exports to Israel accounted for only \$15,163, or 0.0008 per cent of the sultanate's total exports, Oman's Ministry of Commerce said.

Trade between Oman and Israel consists mainly of paper products, petrochemicals and electrical goods.

The head of Israel's trade mission in Oman, Obed Ben Haim, told AFP he expected the figures to be even weaker in 1998, following a one-year freeze in state relations between the two countries.

Oman and Qatar are the only two Gulf countries which permit Israeli trade missions, although neither has formal diplomatic ties with the Jewish state.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're lucky in love right now. In fact, you may have more choices than you know what to do with. Either that, or you're involved with some activity that includes a lot of children. If you're not playing with the Cub Scout troop or Brownies already, why not? You could learn a lot from each other.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) If you go shopping today, you could spend too much. That's unusual for a Taurus, but the moon in Gemini puts pressure on your Solar Second House of finances. All sorts of frivolous items catch your eye. It's a dangerous phase, but it passes quickly. Hold off on your shopping trip until tomorrow and your frugal tendencies will prevail.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You're full of ideas, bubbling over with them, and everybody around you benefits. You're a joy and a delight to be around today, so don't be shy. Even a person you thought didn't like you much thinks you're charming and entertaining. Everybody is having more fun because you're at the party.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) Your workload is about to get easier. You've been struggling with a problem there for some time. It'll become a routine soon, so that weight should lift from your mind. Meanwhile, it's a good day to gather information. If you call a talkative friend, you'll quickly catch up on all the gossip.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) If you wake up irritated, it's probably due to a withheld communication. There's something you wanted to say to an older person but didn't, out of respect. That was probably a good idea. There might be a way you can communicate a new idea without causing an argument. It's to your advantage to find that way and use it.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Somebody feels strongly about what should be done, and maybe it's to your advantage to go along. Looks like it means a lot less to you than it does to him or her. You don't have to look like a pushover, however. Pretend to put up a struggle and you'll get more points for acquiescing.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) If this were a perfect world, you'd be out travelling with your best friends, having fascinating conversations, figuring out the meaning of life, writing your next novel together and laughing uproariously. Well, guess what? This can be a perfect world. All you have to do is make it happen.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You're pushed to manifest your talents today. It looks like you can't get to where you want to go from where you are. You don't have enough money or whatever else you think it takes. Actually, the restrictions will make the victory even sweeter. You should practice doing what you love and the money will follow.


SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) There may be complications today, not the least of which is an argumentative partner. This person doesn't let you get a word in edgewise. That's okay. It won't take you many words to make your point. You're brilliant again today, as usual. Try as they might, nobody's going to be able to best you in a battle of wits.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Continue to write letters, fill out forms and catch up on your reading. If you spend the day doing those chores, you'll be amazed. Not only will you be rid of those countless scraps of paper, but your mind will be clearer. By tomorrow, you'll see what needs to be done and you'll move quickly.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You and your sweetheart still have lots to talk about. If you don't have a sweetheart, seriously consider the person you find yourself conversing with most often. A friendship could turn into romance this weekend with hardly any effort on your part at all. In fact, it kind of looks like it's going in that direction by itself.

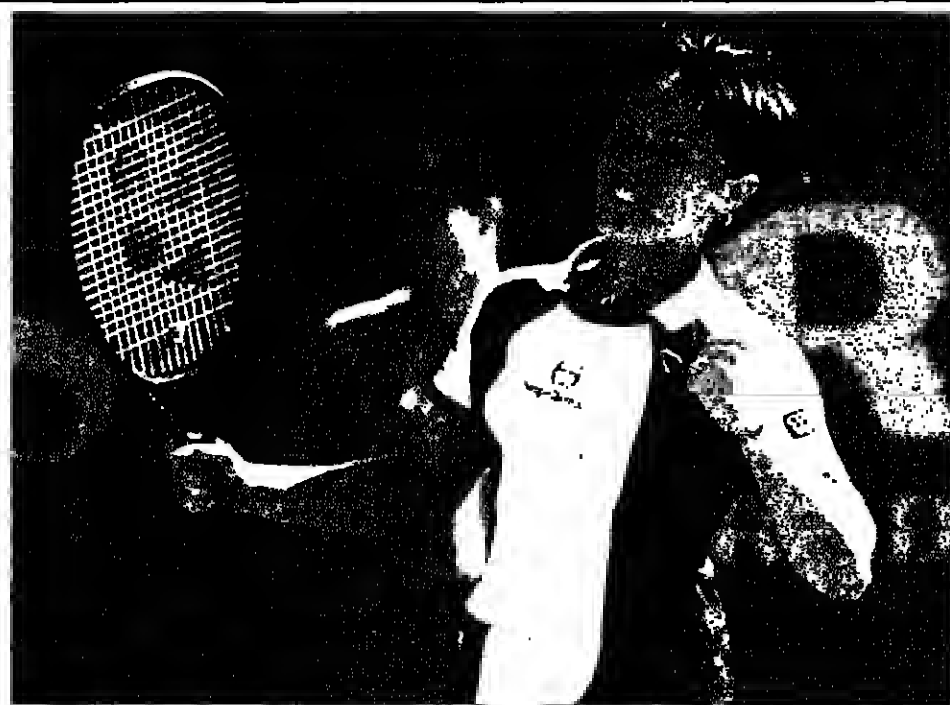
PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) There's lots of work around your place. You don't know what to do first and you might feel overwhelmed. All you need to do is set priorities. Get together with your mate and figure out what can be postponed until later. The planning may be the most important part of your day.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN											
TELEPHONE: 507171 / 507179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 15/08/1998											
PAGE	12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / R	QTY.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
5	355.500	170.000	AMMAN BANK	19.1	85	67	1350	314460	226.50	234.00	7.50+
	2.100	1.620	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	4.24	7	14405	23767	1.65	1.65	-
	3.230	1.130	BANK OF JORDAN	5	0.00	3	8500	3891	1.14	1.16	0.02+
	1.300	870	MID. EAST INV. BK.	65.7	0.00	2	2000	2000	96	1.00	0.04+
	2.680	1.550	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.1	6.52	11	20825	32543	1.56	1.59	0.03+
	6.510	2.610	THE HOUSING BK.	19.9	3.18	50	28846	90954	3.15	3.14	0.01-
	3.450	1.780	JOR. INVEST. BANK	9	0.00	1	650	1236	1.83	1.84	0.01+
	4.000	1.690	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.9	0.00	17	9639	16950	1.74	1.75	0.01+
	3.900	1.350	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	23.7	3.25	8	24418	37462	1.53	1.54	0.01+
	1.060	800	REIT-AL-HAL (REITWA)	3.9	0.00	1	150	122	0.82	0.81	0.01-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 306.34 %CHG: +2.60 167 110883 529344											
	4.000	1.400	JERUSALEM INSUR.	9.8	5.52	5	18113	26014	1.40	1.45	0.05+
	2.850	1.640	JOR. FIRE INSUR.	7.5	9.33	1	200	536	2.73	2.68	0.05-
	2.210	1.080	IRAKI LAND INSUR.	8.2	0.00	2	1015	1117	1.10	1.10	-
	2.350	1.800	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	9.1	0.00	1	650	1236	1.93	1.90	0.03-
	2.630	1.200	JORDAN GULF INSUR.	9	0.00	14	100708	150575	1.49	1.50	0.01+
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 129.04 %CHG: -0.07 23 120686 179476											
	2.240	1.470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.0	5.36	16	12821	19754	1.55	1.54	0.01-
	4.030	1.610	JORD. ELECTRICITY	15.3	4.03	35	537	1320	2.36	2.48	0.12+
	1.900	900	NATL. PORTFOLIO	26.4	0.00	30	81726	70131	4.92	4.96	0.04+
	1.590	330	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	9	0.00	1	1000	330	3.33	3.33	-
	1.180	1.060	MID. EAST HOTELS	9	0.00	1	2000	2200	1.10	1.10	-
	4.600	1.850	JORD. INTL. INV. EDCO	10.0	1.99	7	10760	21631	1.98	2.01	0.03+
	1.210	820	ZARCA DEVELOPMENT	21.7	0.00	8	1258	1008	1.42	1.42	-
	1.830	1.200	UNITED CO.	5.4	8.94	9	7052	8656	1.20	1.23	0.03+
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 111.57 %CHG: +0.36 79 212296 319262											
	4.097	1.340	JOR. CHEM. FACT.	11.9	5.50	44	236832	473653	2.01	2.00	0.01-
	4.110	1.690	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	18.0	0.00	3	3341	5676	1.70	1.70	-
	4.750	4.750	ARAB PETRO. CO.	26.4	0.00	1	10000	49500	4.95	4.96	0.01+
	11.250	9.980	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.3	8.35	9	310	3302	10.73	10.65	0.08-
	5.990	4.450	JORDAN TANNING	7.9	8.16	2	500	2450	4.70	4.90	0.20+
	1.820	1.060	INDUSTRIAL COM. AGR.	63.2	0.00	3	271	287	1.07	1.07	-
	5.740	2.400	ARAB PHARM. MFG.	7.7	2.69	93	39575	109543	2.70	2.79	0.09+
	5.800	1.230	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	5.4	8.06	6	1100	5084	1.25	1.24	0.01-
	2.940	2.450	JORDAN DAIRY	6.1	10.10	2	114	314	2.75	2.75	-
	6.350	4.700	JOR. ALUMINA PV. IND.	7.0	6.02	45	27868	161349	5.65	5.81	0.16+
	570	400	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	14.2	0.00	3	2400	1008	4.22	4.22	-
	1.100	670	ARAB PAPER COV. TRD.	24.4	0.00	1	200	160	0.81	0.80	0.01-
	620	410	NATIONAL INDUS.	9	0.00	1	400	164	0.41	0.41	-
	590	370	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	8	3250	2235	0.40	0.38	0.02-
	1.760	820	UNIV. CHEM. INDUS.	8.2	10.00	6	1300	1040	0.82	0.80	0.02-
	2.300	790	NATL. CABLE WIRE MFG.	37.5	0.00	3	5000	4000	0.79	0.80	0.01+
	730	480	JOR. SULPHUR-CHRM.	18.7	0.00	12	14750	6790	1.48	1.46	0.02-
	1.470	1.150	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	14.3	0.00	8	7100	9182	1.25	1.30	0.05+
	740	390	KAWTHER INVEST.	9	0.00	33	33950	18732	0.53	0.56	0.03+
	1.040	500	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	8.7	0.00	23	24200	12799	0.52	0.53	0.01+
	1.600	1.200	NATL. CHEMICAL	8.7	0.00	4	1300	1637	1.25	1.24	0.01-
	1.090	700	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	9.7	14.49	7	3900	5700	1.41	1.40	0.01-
	1.610	1.150	EL - KAY READY WEAR	40.8	0.00	6	5750	6644	1.15	1.16	0.01+
	1.310	970	INDL. TOBACCO	6.9	5.95	7	1260	1240	0.97	0.98	0.01+
	890	660	JORDAN STEEL	9.4	8.33	12	245000	209700	0.86	0.84	0.02-
	670	550	MID. EAST COMPLEX	10.3	0.00	10	31900	18174	0.56	0.57	0.01+
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 89.18 %CHG: +0.15 346 704571 1106413											
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 187.00 %CHG: +1.86 615 1148436 2134495											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 15/08/1998											
PAGE	12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / R	QTY.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	500	340	JOR. TRADE FAC.	9	0.00	3	20000	8500	0.44	0.43	0.01-
	1.340	1.000	KARA FOR INVESTMENT	65.6	0.00	1	1000	1000	1.00	1.00	-
	280	200	ARAB FIB. INDUSTRY	9	0.00	6	1000	1682	1.28	1.27	0.01-
	2.220	1.050	CENTURY INV. GROUP	9	0.00	1	1000	1280	1.26	1.26	-
	600	330	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	2	2000	2040	0.35	0.34	0.01-
	430	240	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	28.8	0.00	6	9200	2300	2.24	2.25	0.01+
	230	230	NATL. TRADING	9	0.00	2	1100	3111	0.30	0.30	-
	480	360	NATL. MULT. ENG. MACHCO	9	0.00	9	28298	9786	0.36	0.34	0.02-
	570	310	NATKAD DIES & BOWLS	9	0.00	4	140	53	0.40	0.38	0.02-
	350	350	ARAB ELECT. INDUS.	9	0.00	1	350	123	0.35	0.35	-
	730	570	RAST PHARM.	9	0.00	2	72800	2800	0.58	0.58	-
	340	210	1. TEXTILE MANUF.	9	0.00	2	3100	750	0.25	0.24	0.01-
	950	550	ADVANCED FINANCIAL IND.	9	0.00	3	2100	1197	0.57	0.57	-
	400	280	FINANC. SERV. P. CORP.	9	0.00	1	1750	612	0.42	0.42	0.02+
	700	430	NATL. POLYMER	9	0.00	2	500	255	0.51	0.51	-
	740	330	OPTICALS HEARING CO.	9	0.00	2	502	108	0.38	0.37	0.01-
	580	580	NAT. ALUMINUM	32.2	0.00	1	3000	9745	0.64	0.65	0.01+
	10200	690	AL-KHICAL PRINTING CO.	10.8	10.67	6	11100	7771	0.70	0.71	0.01+
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 187.00 %CHG: +1.86 615 1148436 2134495											

Lyon
trounce
Toulouse
6-1

National League			
Cincinnati	3	Montreal	2
Chicago Cubs	6	Houston	4
St Louis	10	Pittsburgh	5
Philadelphia	6	Colorado	2
NY Mets	3	Arizona	2
Atlanta	5	Los Angeles	2
San Diego	7	Milwaukee	0
San Francisco	10	Florida	0
American League			
Boston	13	Minnesota	12
Baltimore	15	Cleveland	3
Detroit	13	Oakland	4
Anaheim	7	Toronto	5
NY Yankees	6	Texas	4
White Sox	14	Seattle	2
Kansas City	11	Tampa Bay	9



Selcs advanced to her third straight semi-final Thursday by beating Wimbledon runner-up Nathalie Tauziat, the fifth seed from France.

TODAY AT	<div>CINEMA TEL: 46-4144</div> <div>PHILADELPHIA '1'</div> <div>Leonardo DiCaprio...in</div> <div>THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 46-4144</div> <div>PHILADELPHIA '2'</div> <div>Comedian Adel Imam .. in</div> <div>AL ZA'EEM</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 46-4228</div> <div>PLAZA</div> <div>Comedian Adel Imam .. in</div> <div>AL ZA'EEM</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30</div> <div>Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 86-7743</div> <div>CONCORD</div> <div>CONCORD '1'</div> <div>Adel Imam & Yusra... in</div> <div>LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 6:00, 10:30</div> <div>RELIC</div> <div>Shows: 3:30, 5:30</div> <div>CONCORD '2'</div> <div>BABY'S DAY OUT</div> <div>Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 97-4791</div> <div>GALLERIA 1</div> <div>ABDOUN</div> <div>www.cns.com.jo/Galleria</div> <div>Comedian Adel Imam .. in</div> <div>AL ZA'EEM</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30</div> <div>Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30</div>	<div>CINEMA TEL: 97-4793</div> <div>GALLERIA 2</div> <div>ABDOUN</div> <div>www.cns.com.jo/Galleria</div> <div>Robin Williams & Matt Damon...in</div> <div>GOODWILL HUNTING</div> <div>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 pm</div> <div>AL ZA'EEM</div> <div>Shows: 10:10 pm</div>	<div>Hisham Yanes Theatre</div> <div>TEL: 4625155</div> <div>STARTING JULY 13TH</div> <div>The Authority in the Service of the People</div> <div>Starring Hisham Yanes .. and the group</div> <div>For reservations call: 4640155, 4625155</div>
----------	---	---	--	---	--	--	--

Arab Junior Swimming Championships Jordan's Majaj wins her 3rd gold medal as teammates add silver and 2 bronze

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's Hana Majaj Saturday beat all expectations and proved that she is worth to be called the Kingdom's next swimming star when she won the third gold medal for Jordan at the 5th Arab Junior Swimming Championships.

Majaj won her third gold medal when she took first place in the 50m butterfly clocking 31.05 beating Egypt's Shaza Abu Ismael who clocked 31.94 and third placed Algeria's Widad Kouzch with 32.09. The Kingdom's girls Under-13 team also added a silver medal in the 4x50m relay clocking 2:29.66 while the Kingdom's boys Under-13 4x50m relay team took the bronze medal clocking 2:21.66.

Another bronze came by the Kingdom's boys Under-15 4x100m relay team by clocking 4:55.28. Jordan now has a total of three gold, two silver and seven bronze medals with one day left to go.

Majaj, the star of Jordan's team, expressed her delight at winning another gold added to her name.

"I can't describe my feelings after getting the third gold for my country," Majaj told the Jordan Times.

Majaj who came in last place in Friday's 200m freestyle said that she only entered the race to get more points for Jordan.

"I was targeting more points for our team and that's why I entered the race," she said.

Meanwhile Coach Ali Nawwas admitted that Majaj was a bit tired.

"Hana was tired but I had no choice but to let her in upon her request," Nawwas told the Jordan Times.

Meanwhile Morocco's coach Marsoul Abdul Razzaq noted the improvement in the level of Jordan's swimmers.

"I was surprised to see the level Jordan has reached in only two years," Abdul Razzaq told the Jordan Times.

"But there are some technical matters that should be resolved by the organisers of the event," he added.

So far, Majaj captured two gold medals in the 100m butterfly in the Under-17 category and in the 200m butterfly.

The Kingdom won four bronze medals by Sadeq Damrah in the 100m breaststroke; the boys Under-13 4x100m relay team and the boys Under-15 team in the 4x100m relay and the girls Under-16 team in the 4x100 freestyle relay.

The girls Under-14 team won a silver medal in the 4x100m freestyle relay. Egypt still leads the standings in the team event with 53 gold, 44 silver and 25 bronze medals. They seem likely to remain in



Jordan's Hana Majaj on the podium after winning the country's third gold medal (Photo by Abdullah Ayyoub)

Results of the 6th day of the event:

• **4x50m relay girls Under-13**
1- Egypt 2:15.65
2- Jordan 2:29.66
3- Lebanon 2:38.83

• **4x100m relay girls Under-15**
1- Egypt 4:45.08
2- Tunisia 4:57.51
3- Algeria 5:05.11
4- Jordan 5:30.18

• **4x100m relay girls Under-17**
1- Egypt 4:50.13
2- Algeria 4:54.86
3- Syria 5:02.40

• **4x50m boys Under-13**
1- Egypt 2:06.79
2- Oman 2:14.45
3- Jordan 2:21.66

• **4x100 relay boys Under-15**
1- Egypt 4:17.54
2- Syria 4:38.80
3- Jordan 4:55.28

• **4x100m relay boys Under-17**
1- Egypt 4:08.53
2- Algeria 4:16.77
3- Syria 4:23.60
Jordan came fifth with 4:28.56

• **50m butterfly Under-13**
1- Mai Ra'fat Egypt 31.36
2- Suha Hamad Egypt 32.72
3- Sabriah Dahban Algeria 34.41
Jordan's Sandi Zuraig came fifth clocking 35.64

• **50m backstroke Under-17**
1- Karim Al Junhani Tunisia 29.43
2- Aziz Altomi Morocco 30.51
3- Othman Bofrash Algeria 30.91
Jordan's Loai Haqi came sixth clocking 32.27

• **50m butterfly Under-15**
1- Yasmeen Abu Alez Egypt 30.24
2- Narmeen Al Shafei Egypt 31.01
3- Mary Moskerian Syria 31.07

• **50m butterfly Under-17**
1- Hana Majaj Jordan 31.05
2- Shaza Abu Ismael Egypt 31.94
3- Widad Kouza Algeria 32.09

• **50m backstroke Under-13**
1- Raouf Ben Ohaid Algeria 30.54
2- Abdul Rahman Kakai Lebanon 32.90
3- Omar Al Jaziri Egypt 33.92
Jordan's George Khouri came fourth with 34.34

• **50m backstroke Under-15**
1- Mohammed Ibrahim Egypt 31.34
2- Ayman Al Koulalbi Oman 32.55
3- Younes Marabet Morocco 32.65
Jordan's Raed Nawras came sixth clocking 36.02

• **200m individual medley Under-13**
1- Raouf Ben Ohaid Algeria 2:22.24
2- Karim Othman Egypt 2:27.45
3- Mohammed Awwad Egypt 2:37.44
Jordan's George Khouri came eighth with 2:53.05

STANDINGS (by press time)

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Egypt	53	44	25
Algeria	13	9	19
Morocco	4	9	5
Syria	4	8	9
Tunisia	5	6	4
Jordan	3	2	7
Lebanon	1	2	7
Oman	-	3	4
Saudi Arabia	-	-	3

first place in the event which concludes Sunday.

Only three teams are taking part in the water polo competition: Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iraq while the diving competition was cancelled.

The August 10-16 championships groups swimmers from Saudi Arabia,

Kuwait, Egypt, Algeria, Oman, Iraq, Syria, Qatar, Tunisia, Palestine, Morocco in addition to Jordan.

Held under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Rania, the championship is the first of many in preparation for the upcoming Pan-Arab

Games which will be held in Amman 1999.

DELUXE APARTMENT FOR RENT

Behind Orthodox Club. Consists of 3 bedrooms (one master), 3 bathrooms, reception, spacious dining room, spacious kitchen. Completely renovated — new central heating, new bathrooms, new tiling. Could be rented furnished or unfurnished. Rent: Negotiable.

Interested parties please call 4656241 or 5927381

Klinsmann on verge of retiring

HAMBURG (AP) — Juergen Klinsmann, one of soccer's top forwards this decade, told a German newspaper Saturday he may retire without playing another match.

Klinsmann was a former player of the year in England, Germany national team captain and claimed most of the game's top trophies during his long career including the 1990 World Cup title.

"I don't know if I'm going to play anymore. My 15-month son needs me and I need him," Klinsmann, 34, told Bild, Germany's largest-circulation daily.

"In the last two or three years my values have completely changed," he added. "It doesn't excite me to push for lofty goals anymore. I have a family."

Klinsmann, who hasn't signed with a club after leading Tottenham Hotspur out of relegation last season, has reportedly been asked to play for Major League Soccer by the U.S. league officials.

But Klinsmann, who has an American wife and has often stated he may want to ring out his career in the United States, said he now plans to study languages and economic management instead.

Klinsmann was captain of Germany's 1996 European championship team and won a UEFA Cup title with Inter Milan, but may have been at his peak when he single-handedly led Bayern Munich to the 1996 UEFA Cup title, while breaking the scoring record for the competition.

Klinsmann's scoring prowess has diminished since then, with his last match ending bitterly. Germany, a perennial favorite, was ousted in the quarterfinals of the recent World Cup by Croatia.

Hakkinen takes 8th pole

BUDAPEST (AFP) — World championship leader Mika Hakkinen of Finland grabbed pole position for Sunday's Hungarian Grand Prix as the McLaren-Mercedes team continued to dominate the Formula One season.

Hakkinen was fastest in Saturday's qualifying session, ahead of his Scottish teammate David Coulthard, who had been quickest on Friday, as he claimed his eighth pole of the season.

McLaren have conceded the pole only once in 12 races this year, and it was their eighth 1-2 qualifying domination.

Two-time world champion Michael Schumacher of Germany took third place on the grid in his Ferrari.

Schumacher, who trails Hakkinen by 16 points in the championship standings with just five races remaining, desperately needs a good result over the 77-lap race at the Hungaroring to keep alive his hopes of a third title.

Hakkinen pipped Coulthard by just over a 10th-of-a-second on the tight track while former world champion Damon Hill produced his best qualifying performance of the season for Jordan with the fourth-fastest time.

Ireland's Eddie Irvine was fifth-quickest in the other Ferrari ahead of defending world champion Jacques Villeneuve of Canada in a Williams.

Bayyari's bloc wins Wihdat elections

Club to focus on various sports, build stadium in near future

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Fahd Bayyari, former chairman of Al Wihdat Club, was re-elected late Friday defeating his nearest opponent by collecting more than half of the eligible votes.

Bayyari, who led the 11-man bloc dubbed "The Club for All," defeated four other rivals who competed for the chairmanship, receiving 656 votes.

Bayyari told the Jordan Times that he and other members of the club's management expected to meet with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, who has said that he intends to visit the club's premises in the coming few days.

He noted that among the issues to be discussed with the Crown Prince were the riots and hooliganism of the country's soccer fans, especially following Wihdat's matches with main rival Al Faisali.

On Thursday, the Regent criticised acts of vandalism, rioting and violence that followed a recent match between Al Wihdat and Al Faisali at Al Hussein Sport City saying that such acts do not reflect the spirit of sports.

The Crown Prince, who was speaking at the opening ceremony of the Fubeis Cultural Festival, described the riots as "unjustified acts."

Bayyari said that during Prince Hassan's expected visit to the club "we will listen to His Royal Highness' advice on how to uproot this phenomenon and upgrade the standard of sports fans in the country."

He said that the Al Wihdat hopes to hold meetings with Al Faisali's man-

agement to discuss this problem.

"We would like to maintain good terms with Al Faisali's officials. But competition between the two clubs will certainly create some problems that are natural and cannot be contained easily."

"It is not a big issue. It is a natural phenomenon that happens everywhere, but we should work to minimise its magnitude and create awareness among the fans of the two clubs," Bayyari added.

"I believe that whatever measures we undertake, it is difficult to eliminate football violence and boogalians altogether," he added.

Bayyari told the Jordan Times his bloc's main priority was to focus not only on football but to include other sports "which were neglected by the former leadership of the club."

"We believe that other sports like handball, basketball, boxing, table tennis and other cultural and social activities should be given the same support given to football."

"The other thing we should focus on is to start the construction work of Al Wihdat Stadium in the nearest future," he added.

Bayyari said that the Municipality of Greater Amman had donated 30 dunums to the club four years ago, but the club's management failed to turn the plan into reality. No reason was given for that.

He pointed that another issue expected to receive the attention of the new management is how to increase the members of the club, which stands at 1,260 members down from 6,000 in 1994.

"We will work hard to reinstate the members whose membership was annulled by the former management and to attract more members to the club," Bayyari said.

He noted that revenue from membership dues amounted to four per cent of the club's total income. "It should not be less than 30 per cent."

Responding to the "deficit" in the club's annual budget, Bayyari explained that it occurred due to the "concentration" on football and neglecting other sports.

The annual financial report of the club showed that the total revenue of the club amounted to JD268,000 while expenditure amounted to JD281,000, with a deficit of JD13,000.

"Money is not a problem to the club. There are many ways where we can raise money," he added.

Wihdat's outgoing chairman Bahjat Shihab did not run for elections this time because he presided over the club's chairmanship for the past four years.

Riyad Abdul Kareem headed the rival bloc that contested the club's presidency. Three other members contesting the chairmanship included Mohammad Salameh, Mahmoud Kouz and Adli Kouz.

Al Wihdat currently lead the Premier League Championship and are looking for their 5th consecutive title. This year they won the first of the season's titles when they won the season-opening and their fourth Cup Winners' Cup. They lost the Jordan Cup final to Al Faisali Friday.

Sampras overwhelms Spadea to move to semis

MASON (AFP) — Pete Sampras applied the brakes to fellow American Vince Spadea's upset run, knocking him out in the quarterfinals of the \$2.45 million ATP Championship 6-3, 6-2 here Friday.

The defeat was a bucketful of ice water on the hopes of 24-year-old Spadea, who had ousted former Wimbledon champion Andre Agassi and Richard Krajicek.

But current Wimbledon holder Sampras, who has won the All England club title five times, was too strong and now has a Saturday semifinal against unseeded Magnus Larsson, an old foe from last December's Davis Cup final that Sweden won.

Larsson won an all-Swedish quarterfinal over Thomas Johansson 6-4, 7-6 (7/2) to advance against the defending champion and World No. 2, who needs to win the title to reclaim the top spot from Chile's Marcelo Rios.

Fifth seed Pat Rafter of Australia pushed the defence of his U.S. Open title up a gear with a 6-4, 7-6 (10/8) victory against Australian Open winner Petr Korda of the Czech Republic.



Pete Sampras

Rafter spent one hour and 48 minutes on the way to victory. Former French Open winner Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia became Rafter's Saturday opponent by ousting Czech doubles partner Daniel Vacek 6-4, 6-4.

Sampras spent 24 minutes in each set and won the last five games against Spadea. "It was a good day. Everything clicked for me," Sampras said. "I knew that Vince would be confident after his wins. I played

well." Sampras, 27, said he is right on schedule for the U.S. Open. "I feel good, feel fit," he said. "My tennis is there."

Rafter's start to the North American summer looks promising with the U.S. Open starting in just over two weeks.

"I have a heavy schedule. I'm a little bit concerned," Rafter said of his fitness and form. "I don't usually fire this early on in my run. But how things have panned out this summer, I've started out great."

"Once you're playing well, you've got to ride it. Rafter has a huge task ahead of him as he moves to the August 31 start of the U.S. Open. He has more than 1,400 computer ranking points to defend starting this week, including 1,014 he earned in New York one year ago."

Rafter's victory over Korda was his eighth consecutive triumph and served to help turn around a year which began slowly as the player lost some confidence after taking his first Grand Slam title.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANNAH HIRSH

A WINNING COMBINATION

Both vulnerable. East deals.
NORTH
♠ A Q 8 2
♥ 3 6 5
♦ Q J 3
♣ K 5 4
WEST
♠ 10 7 6 4
♥ K 10 4 3 2
♦ 10 4 2
♣ A 8
EAST
♠ K J 9 8 5
♥ Q 7
♦ A K 7 6 3
♣ 9
SOUTH
♠ Void
♥ A J 9
♦ 9 8 5
♣ A Q J 10 7 6 5 2
The bidding:
EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH
Pass 2c Pass Pass
Opening lead: Four of ♠

Declarer play is not simply a matter of technique. On many occasions you will have to guess the lie of the cards, but try to position yourself to recover if a key card happens to be wrong. Consider this deal from the Politken World Pairs held annually in Denmark.
Five clubs was the popular bid by South after East opened the bidding with one spade. It was a contract that might make but, if not, it was probably a profitable sacrifice

VACANCY

Jordan Securities Commission seeks qualified candidates for the following position:

"Executive Secretary to the Chairman"

Purpose of the Post:

• To provide office management functions of the Chairman's office, coordination and follow up on action points.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Recognised secretarial course. Knowledge and experience with computer applications, management and electronic communications.
- Fluency in English and Arabic.
- Minimum five years of experience in office management in the capacity of Executive Assistant/Executive Secretary.

Skills and Attributes:

- Ability to organise, prioritise and manage the work of a high-level office.
- Good judgement, initiative and a high sense of responsibility.

Please send detailed resume, in English to:

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT
JORDAN SECURITIES COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 8802, Amman-Jordan.

Applications for this position must be received by August 31, 1998. Acknowledgement will only be sent to short-listed candidates under serious consideration.

Kenyans expect more than tears from Albright

NAIROBI (AFP) — Kenyans are looking for more than tears when U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visits Nairobi to inspect the site of the bombed U.S. embassy here.

What they want is cold cash — lots of it.

The massive car-bomb blast on August 7 killed 12 Americans and 32 Kenyan embassy employees, but the damage outside was far worse.

The total death toll so far is 247 — seven people were still in intensive care Saturday — and the blast injured 5,000 people.

A virtually simultaneous bomb at the U.S. embassy in neighbouring Tanzania killed 10 people, all Tanzanians, and wounded 72.

Lawyers and the Kenyan media are accusing the United States of negligence for locating its embassy in the heart of the city, surrounded by high-rise buildings and constant vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Normally, too, there were no armed U.S. Marines outside — just Kenyan guards armed with small wooden batons, despite the security concerns of Ambassador Bushnell, who twice asked the State Department to relocate the mission.

Washington refused on the grounds of cost, U.S. officials said.

The average salary in Kenya is just \$22 a month, and hospital care is expensive.

President Daniel Arap Moi put the immediate cost of the damage at more than \$500 million.

Insurance companies say they will pay out on death policies, but not on business claims, which are usually excluded if the damage is caused by terrorism.

Dozens of businesses for blocks around the embassy will be out of action for months as the buildings are rehabilitated, and many lost all their records.

Apart from the costs to the businesses themselves, that means hundreds of workers will be laid off, with a ripple effect throughout the country as remittances to relatives dry up.

The tourism sector was already in deep trouble as a result of political violence before general elections last December, crumbling infrastructure and attacks on visitors.

Now, tour operators fear many tourists will choose other destinations as a result of the bomb. They were incensed by a U.S. warning to Americans not to visit Kenya which was not lifted for a week after the August 7 blast.

A Kenya Tourist Board

meeting on Wednesday said that travel agents had recorded between 20 and 50 per cent cancellation of bookings since the twin bombings.

Kenyans were also angered by what the East African Standard termed "the ugly side of Americans" — U.S. Marines who secured the embassy building and guarded it as others dug through the rubble outside to extricate survivors.

Bushnell said the Marines stayed in the embassy because they feared a fire, and because looters were going through the building "within minutes" of the blast — which was dismissed as an "alibi" by opposition politician Beth Mugo.

The Kenyan government, meanwhile, says it is virtually broke, with not enough money to pay teachers increases it agreed before the December elections, which saw Moi returned to power for a fifth and final term, and his Kenya African National Union retaining a reduced majority in parliament.

But international donors froze aid mid last year, mainly because of high-level corruption, and inflation is running at 11.3 per cent.

The shilling has weakened since the bombings, too, according to a Central Bank of Kenya official mainly because of increased demand for dol-

lars by importers who want to replace or renovate buildings and stock damaged by the blast.

The U.S. government said it was considering setting up a fund to compensate the relatives of Kenyan embassy employees killed in the blast, and those who were injured, but Kenyan editorial writers and others are demanding that they compensate the thousands of other victims as well.

The government, analysts said, can be expected to ask Albright to provide substantial aid, and to put pressure on the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other donors to resume suspended aid and even increase it.

The Law Society of Kenya is meanwhile exploring whether victims can undertake a class-action suit against the U.S. government for compensation on the grounds of negligence.

It wrote to the New York City bar association seeking its opinion.

The letter, made available to AFP, wants it determined, among other points, whether the location of the embassy was negligent, and whether the U.S. security system was lax.

Washington announced Saturday that Albright would visit Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam "at the weekend," but gave no specific timing.



FAIROUZ AT JUPITER'S TEMPLE: Famous singer Fairouz sings during her performance in the courtyard of the Roman Temple of Jupiter in Baalbek on Friday. Fairouz opened the 12th International Festival of Baalbek for the first time in the festival's 24 year history. This is the second successive year of the festival's revival since the civil war ended in 1990 (Reuters photo)

Fairouz sings at Baalbek after 24-year absence

BAALBEK (AP) — Fairouz, one of the Arab World's most popular singers, captivated fans with her first performance at the Roman ruins of Baalbek in nearly a quarter of a century.

The Lebanese singer, who rose to fame in the days before Lebanon's brutal 15-year civil war, sang here Friday for the first time since 1974, the year before the war began.

She is to perform for six more nights.

Fairouz is participating in the Baalbek International Festival, which continues until Aug. 29.

The Roman ruins at Baalbek, 85 kilometres northeast of Beirut, are a popular tourist site. But during the war, they were shunned by foreigners and locals alike because the nearby town was a stronghold of Islamists. Groups based there were blamed for the kidnappings of Westerners during the war.

"Baalbek of the past has returned," said Mazen Haidar, a 61-year-old businessman who held back tears when Fairouz appeared on stage, dressed in white and illuminated by a single spot light.

Some in the audience wept when she sang "Baalbek, I'm a candle in your steps," a nostalgic song about pre-war days in Lebanon.

Mansour and Elias Rahbani, brothers of Fairouz's late husband Assi, who had directed her work, also were there.

"I am happy with Fairouz's return to Baalbek," said Elias Rahbani, who also is a musician. "The people's turnout and their rush to attend her concert is natural." President Elias Hrawi attended the show, along with cabinet ministers and members of parliament.

After the three-hour concert, Hrawi hugged Fairouz and said: "You are the opera of Baalbek. Festivals should start with you because you have become a part of Lebanon's history." This year's festival — the highest since the civil war — includes American jazz performers and a German orchestra.

Tickets for each performance range in price from \$20 to \$133.

The festival resumed last year after the government restored its authority over most of the country. Fairouz didn't perform then because of a dispute over salaries.

Fairouz's return to the Baalbek festival was viewed as a further sign of Lebanon's post-war recovery.

She opened Friday to a sell-out crowd of 4,000 people under the towering floodlit columns of the Temple of Jupiter.

"Baalbek of the past has returned," said Mazen Haidar, a 61-year-old businessman who held back tears when Fairouz appeared on stage, dressed in white and illuminated by a single spot light.

Some in the audience wept when she sang "Baalbek, I'm a candle in your steps," a nostalgic song about pre-war days in Lebanon.

Mansour and Elias Rahbani,

Britons prefer 'Beatles' — who else?

LONDON (AFP) — Asking 5,000 Britons to rank the top singers and bands of all time was only ever going to put one group at the apex of the pyramid: The Beatles. Of course. Who else? And so it was when the biggest-ever poll on Britain's favourite crooners was published Friday. Followed well behind by Elvis Presley and Frank Sinatra, then Queen and Elton John. The spectacularly merchandised Spice Girls won the 58th position, despite having faded into obscurity since Oasis occupies the eighth spot.

Dream travelling companions? Thatcher at bottom of list!

ROME (AFP) — German supermodel Claudia Schiffer and actor-director Roberto Benigni are dream travelling companions for Italians, but a trip with "Iron Lady" Margaret Thatcher would get less than two per cent going, a survey showed. Almost 44 per cent of 396 Italian men polled picked blonde bombshell Schiffer as worth packing their suitcase for. Twenty-one per cent chose Princess Caroline of Monaco, and 12 per cent screen siren Sophia Loren. Just 1.7 per cent said ageing ex-British Prime Minister Thatcher was the stuff their holiday dreams were made of.

Pele becomes a reluctant grandfather

RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) — Brazilian football great Pele became a reluctant grandfather Friday when his "daughter" gave birth to a girl. The Brazilian news service Estado reported. Pele did not recognise Sandra Machado Arantes do Nascimento Felinto as his daughter until court ruling forced him to do so in 1991. A DNA test presented in the paternity suit against Pele proved that Machado was his daughter, and legally entitled to use his last name.

Streep takes lead role after Madonna quits

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Meryl Streep has accepted the lead role in a movie about a violin teacher after Madonna abandoned the project. Streep will take over the lead role in "Violins," playing Roberta Tzavara, an East Harlem violin teacher who trained a number of inner-city hopefuls, some of whom reached Carnegie Hall standards. The movie was several months into production when Madonna quit in July after creative differences with director Wes Craven.

Bill Gates — a lousy driver

NEW YORK (AP) — The information superhighway is apparently not the only place where Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates has been caught speeding. A police photograph from a 1977 arrest for bad driving on the cover of Briff's Content magazine has drawn attention to a driving record that is blemished with two 1970s arrests in New Mexico and a third in California. Gates was arrested in 1975 for speeding and driving without a license, and in 1977 for running a stop sign and driving without a license. He was arrested again in 1989 in California on suspicion of drunken driving.

Iranian pilgrims cross border into Iraq

AL MUNZIRIYA (AFP) — Around 750 Iranian pilgrims crossed the border into Iraq on Saturday to visit holy shrines for the first time since the start of the Iran-Iraq war 18 years ago, in a move hailed as a step towards closer relations.

Iraqis cut the throats of sheep to mark the occasion and waved national flags and portraits of President Saddam Hussein as they greeted the mostly elderly Iranians at the Al Munziriyah border post in eastern Iraq.

The pilgrimage came after the countries, which fought a war from 1980-1988, struck an accord last month allowing 3,000 Iranians a week to cross the border to visit Shiite Muslim holy sites in Iraq.

Baghdad lifted a ban in force since 1980 on Iranians making pilgrimages to its holy cities in September 1997, but Tehran refused to allow its nationals to travel until a detailed agreement had been reached.

Since then, thousands of Iranian pilgrims have travelled to Iraq's Shiite holy sites by travelling via third countries, particularly Syria, but this is the first time they have crossed directly into Iraq from their homeland.

"Visiting the holy sites is the best way to strengthen cooperation and friendly ties between the two coun-

tries," said Iran's Culture Minister Atoollah Mohajerani, who led the pilgrims as they arrived at Al Munziriyah, around 150 kilometres east of Baghdad.

In April, Iran announced that the road would soon be open for pilgrimages to Iraq, with priority given to relatives of the "martyrs," referring to those who lost their lives during the war.

The 750 pilgrims, including black-clad women, are due to visit sites in Baghdad as well as Najaf and Kerbala, to the south of the capital.

Najaf is home to a mausoleum for the Imam Ali, the first Shiite Muslim spiritual leader and cousin of Prophet Muhammad, while Kerbala is the burial site of seventh-century Shiite leader Imam Hussein, who was a role model Islamic volunteers fighting Iraq during their eight-year conflict.

"We welcome this development in relations between Iraq and Iran and I hope our ties will develop in other areas," said Iraqi Religious Affairs Minister Abdul Munem Ahmad Salih, who welcomed the pilgrims at the border, the official Iraq news agency INA reported.

Tehran and Baghdad agreed in January to work to resolve outstanding obstacles to the normalisation of ties.

10 years after the end of their conflict in 1988 that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives.

The Iraqi charge d'affaires in Iran, Salah Al Samarnad, said the two countries were "working actively to settle all outstanding issues, notably the question of Iraqi prisoners of war (PoWs) in Iran."

"I hope that all these issues will be settled by the end of the year," he told INA.

The issue of exchanging PoWs and recovering soldiers' remains has been a key obstacle to normalisation of ties.

Earlier this month, Iraq and Iran held a new series of meetings on exchanging remaining PoWs following a resumption of exchanges in April when more than 5,500 Iraqi prisoners were freed in return for more than 300 Iranians.

A total of around 53,000 Iraqi prisoners and 39,000 Iranians have been freed since the end of the 1980-1988 conflict.

Before the six-day operation in April, Tehran said at least 5,000 Iranians were still detained in Iraq, while Baghdad said it had released all PoWs except the pilot and that 20,000 Iraqis were still being held in Iran.

Israeli peace activists help rebuild torn-down Arab house

ANATA (AFP) — Some 30 Israeli peace activists on Saturday again helped Palestinians rebuild a house torn down by the Israeli army after their first reconstruction efforts were demolished by soldiers.

The members of the "Israeli Committee Opposing the Tearing Down of Houses" were joined by five American peace activists as they used shovels to clear away rubble in preparation for another round of rebuilding.

The house, situated by the village

of Anata, near the Shuafat refugee camp in east Jerusalem, belonged to Salim Shawamra, a builder and father of six.

The army initially tore down the house July 9 saying it had been built without permission, provoking clashes with Palestinian residents.

After it was partially rebuilt with help from Israeli peace activists, soldiers again demolished it early this month.

According to the Palestinian

Land and Environment Committee, Israel has destroyed 662 houses since the 1993 Oslo accords, most of them since the right-wing Likud Party came to power two years ago.

Israeli authorities have ordered the destruction of 2,000 other houses on the basis they were built without permits.

Palestinians say that they are forced to build without permits due to the difficulty of obtaining permission from Israeli military authorities.

Greens battle construction boom sweeping Lebanese coastline

By Asmara Achcar
Agence France Presse

BEIRUT — Lebanon's coastline, home to ancient ruins and a fragile ecosystem, is undergoing a post-war construction boom that is dramatically altering its appearance and infuriating environmentalists.

The new boom continues widespread illegal building along the coast during Lebanon's chaotic 1975-1990 civil war and is spotting the seaside with ever-increasing numbers of ugly and unauthorised commercial sites.

Vacation complexes, oil storage facilities, commercial buildings, factories and

a giant chicken farm have all found their way to the seashore, even as major private promoters try to wrest hundreds of more acres from the sea by filling them in for new construction sites.

The building boom has already appropriated some 15 per cent of the littoral, according to a study last year by the transportation ministry, which is responsible for maritime and coastal affairs.

The study lists 1,465 cases of unauthorised building along the coast as of one year ago.

"We are moving towards the complete privatisation of the coast, which is

already punctuated by private projects, and towards stripping people of their inalienable right to enjoy the seaside," says urban planner Jad Tabet.

The uncontrolled building boom pits some of the most powerful figures in Lebanon against a handful of ecologists and archaeologists.

Among the big name builders are Interior Minister Michel Murr, the brother and wife of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, Parliamentary Speaker Nabih Berri, ambassadors, and even a Kuwaiti princess, according to the government study.

"Thanks to UNESCO,

'world heritage sites' like Byblos [in the north] and Tyre [in the south] have escaped the disaster, but for how long?" says Abdallah Zakhia, an environmental and human rights lawyer.

The environmentalists have reason to worry. Just off the 6,000-year-old site of ancient Byblos, developers have begun constructing a jetty for luxury yachts.

The construction is now frozen but the jetty itself is only a small part of a development project which is to cover an area four times the size of the ancient port, Tabet says.

In an effort to preserve the coast, environmental associations and Lebanon's

Order of Architects recently fought back a bill in parliament which would have imposed only wrist-slaps on promoters violating zoning laws.

The environmentalists fault the government for creating part of the problem by turning over major construction projects to private promoters due to lack of public funds.

In Beirut, the private Solidere company has been racing since 1994 to wrest 60 hectares from the sea for new construction space in the capital. The company is also responsible for reconstructing the city centre.

In six coastal locations just north of Beirut, two

more companies are filling in the sea for land: Lamoral, which hopes to fill in 200 hectares and the Joseph Khoury Company which is aiming for half that amount.

Zakhia says that the government's policy of turning over projects to promoters is privatising public land and catering to the interests of a "well-heeled minority."

But the government rejects the charges.

"There is no privatisation, and we are providing a public service to citizens by taking care of the coast and moving oil storage facilities away from the population [centres]," says Imad Nawwanat, director general of the transport ministry.

Environmentalists have repeatedly called for the government to put firmer guidelines on developing coastal areas.

"Private investment is not bad in itself, but we absolutely need a master plan which codifies how coastal lands are used," Tabet says.

But any governmental master plan still looks at least two years away.

"We have been preparing an overall plan over the last year and it should be ready two years from now," says Wafaa Sharafeddin, an official at the Council for Development and Reconstruction.

263 hospitals as temper

MANAMA (AFP) — A re- specialised in Bahrain th- reached highs of 50- times said Sunday. Mos- building labourers and oth- news agency. A week ago- the heat in a single day, as- lowest June and July since- average mean daily temper- on the basis of lowest an- each day, was 24.8 degrees

Volume 23 Number

King to cha



By Francesca Ciriac
Jordan Times Staff Report

JOHAN — His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal, the Regent, has announced a new government and a new constitution. The Regent, who has been in power since the death of King Hussein in 1999, said the new government would be formed by a coalition of parties. The Regent also announced that he would be stepping down as Regent and would be succeeded by his son, King Abdullah II. The Regent said that the new constitution would be drafted by a committee of experts. The Regent also announced that he would be stepping down as Regent and would be succeeded by his son, King Abdullah II. The Regent said that the new constitution would be drafted by a committee of experts.

Regent security

JOHAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal, the Regent, has announced a new government and a new constitution. The Regent, who has been in power since the death of King Hussein in 1999, said the new government would be formed by a coalition of parties. The Regent also announced that he would be stepping down as Regent and would be succeeded by his son, King Abdullah II. The Regent said that the new constitution would be drafted by a committee of experts. The Regent also announced that he would be stepping down as Regent and would be succeeded by his son, King Abdullah II. The Regent said that the new constitution would be drafted by a committee of experts.

JOHAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal, the Regent, has announced a new government and a new constitution. The Regent, who has been in power since the death of King Hussein in 1999, said the new government would be formed by a coalition of parties. The Regent also announced that he would be stepping down as Regent and would be succeeded by his son, King Abdullah II. The Regent said that the new constitution would be drafted by a committee of experts. The Regent also announced that he would be stepping down as Regent and would be succeeded by his son, King Abdullah II. The Regent said that the new constitution would be drafted by a committee of experts.